

THE  
**SOCIALIST  
STANDARD**

**1936**



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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*A change of  
cabinets is  
only a . . . .  
change at  
the helm; the  
capitalist . .  
ship still  
ploughs on.*

## Can the Means Test be Abolished?

EVER since 1931, when a large number of unemployed were brought under what is known as the "Means Test," this has been a burning question in British politics. All of the opposition candidates at the November General Election promised, in more or less guarded fashion, to abolish the test, although we are entitled to wonder whether their promises mean quite what the electors thought they meant.

Before going into that question further, it will be useful to explain what is the means test—or rather, what are the several means tests applied by the Government in connection with unemployment pay, Public Assistance, and Old-Age Non-contributory pensions.

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### The Poor Law Means Test 300 years old.

First, in point of time, is the Poor Law or Public Assistance Means Test. This has a very ancient history and has been the model on which other tests have been based. The group of Poor Laws which concern us here are those passed in the 16th and 17th centuries. By

that time, recognising that they were faced permanently with the problem of large masses of workless and homeless men and women, then deprived of a main source of help by the abolition of the monasteries, the Governments abandoned the effort to torture the starving into quiet submission and arranged to provide some sort of maintenance for them. Several Acts passed during the 16th century, culminating in the Acts of 1597 and 1601, appointed collectors in each parish whose duty it was to levy householders and use the proceeds—flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron and other materials—to provide work for the poor. Pauper children were sent out as apprentices and almshouses were built for the aged. Needless to say, the provision was niggardly and hedged about with callous restrictions, although some of the most inhuman of the earlier provisions had to be dropped because those responsible would not work them. (See *Social Administration, including the Poor Laws*, by John J. Clarke, M.A., Pitman & Sons, Ltd.; 1922; p. 25.) What particularly concerns us is the principle of family responsibility. Already in 1601 it was laid down that the destitute must be kept by their relatives if the latter had the means. Under the Act of that year it was provided that grandparents must maintain their grandchildren, parents their children, husbands their wives (and the children of their wives by another father, up to age sixteen), and finally, children had to maintain their parents. (See Clarke, p. 29.) This principle has been retained through many changes of Poor Law Administration, and we find it in the Poor Law Act, 1930, with little alteration. Section 14 of the 1930 Act lays it down that "it shall be the duty of the father, grandfather, mother, grandmother,



husband or child, of a poor, old, blind, lame or impotent person, or other poor person not able to work, if possessed of sufficient means to relieve and maintain that person." Under this clause the authorities may, and do, force relatives to contribute.

The mother of an illegitimate child, so long as she is unmarried or a widow, is bound to maintain the child until age sixteen. A man who marries a woman who has a child, whether legitimate or illegitimate, is responsible for the child till age sixteen.

One interesting addition is that a married woman, with property of her own, now has responsibilities similar to those of the husband.

It will be seen that the ruling class do not show to the destitute wealth-producers and their dependants even a crumb of the open-handed generosity with which they reward the dud Generals and Admirals. Yet although the applicant for relief has to satisfy the above conditions, and many others, we find that, on the last Saturday in September, 1935, Poor Relief was being granted to no fewer than 1,280,942 persons, equivalent to 3.17 per cent. of the population, double the number in 1913 (611,448).

### The Old-Age Pension Means Test.

One development of the Poor Law has been the smaller use of workhouses and the greater extent to which relief is paid to the applicant in his own home. Provided that the authorities maintain a tight check—as, of course, they do—they have found the latter method cheaper. According to the 14th Annual Report of the Ministry of Health (p. 199) the average cost of relief in general Poor Law Institutions in 1932-33 was about 24s. a week, while the average expenditure on relief per head of the "ordinary outdoor poor" (*i.e.*, excluding persons ordinarily employed) was 6s. 1d. a week.

An extension of this method of relieving the destitute in their own homes was the grant under various Acts from 1908 to 1924 of non-contributory old-age pensions at age seventy. There are at present something like 760,000 persons in receipt of old-age non-contributory pensions of 10s. a week or less. This system is now being copied in U.S.A., and there, also, one of the arguments used in support of it is that of cheapness. As Mary T. Norton, a Congresswoman from New Jersey, U.S.A., declared last year, "old-age pensions are cheaper than poor-houses." (*New Militant*, New York, November 30th, 1935.)

The non-contributory pensions are not given to all persons over seventy years of age, but are subject to the condition that the applicant's income from all sources, including gifts, is below a specified low level, savings also being taken into account. This "means test," however, only concerns the income of the applicant, not that of his relatives as

well. It differs, therefore, from the "family means test."

### The Unemployment Pay Means Test.

We now come to the question which has so much occupied the Opposition parties in recent years, the "family means test" applied to some of the unemployed. In 1931 the Law was altered by the National Government so that unemployed persons who had exhausted their right to benefit (by reason of the fact that they had received benefit for six months in a benefit year), and persons who could not show thirty stamps for the two years preceding their application for benefit, were declared eligible for "transitional" payments only. Before this change there was no limit to the period an unemployed person could draw ordinary benefit, provided he or she satisfied the various other conditions.

The difference between ordinary unemployment benefit and "transitional" benefit was that the latter was only payable provided that the Public Assistance authority satisfied itself that the claimant was *in need of assistance*. In other words, when an unemployed man came under the transitional benefit regulations his claim became subject to the "family means test," the kind of test applied to applicants for Poor Relief—the kind of test that has been applied from 1600 onwards.

The applicant had to provide information regarding the earnings of *all members* of the household, also Army and Navy pensions, blind pensions, etc., income from Workmen's Compensation, Friendly Society benefits, assistance from relatives not living at home, savings, etc., etc.

These provisions were embodied, with modifications, in the Unemployment Act, 1934. Section 38 provides that unemployed persons who run out of benefit, instead of having transitional benefit shall come under the newly-created Unemployment Assistance Board and be entitled to an allowance dependent on needs, the need being determined by taking into account the resources of all members of the household. The 1934 Act ruled out, however, from the family income which is taken into account, part of benefit from a Friendly Society and from National Health Insurance, the first £1 of a disability pension and half of any weekly payment by way of Workmen's Compensation.

That is the Law as it stands at present, but the Unemployment Assistance Board's activities promptly led to further outcry and the Government is still considering the question of the allowances. The Means Test will still apply. Eventually the Unemployment Assistance Board is to have control, not only over the unemployed who have fallen out of benefit, but also other able-bodied unemployed (including those not insured at all), who are now under the control of the Public Assistance authorities.

### The Labour Government's Poor Defence.

The application of the family Means Test to the unemployed was an innovation of importance affecting hundreds of thousands directly, and likely to affect others if they remained unemployed for over six months. All the same, the extent and violence of the outcry surprised not only the National Government but even the Labour Party. The reasons why the question has taken on such importance in elections is not far to seek. It meant that the unemployed found even the security of unemployment pay taken from them and also the parents and children of anyone unemployed or likely to become unemployed found themselves involved. They resented the obligation to contribute to the support of their unemployed relatives out of their own inadequate earnings, and resented having to provide information. The interest of the unemployed and their relatives is understandable enough, but the indignation of the Labour Party leaders is not so easy to understand.

It is true that the National Government was responsible for applying the family Means Test to the unemployed after twenty-six weeks on benefit, but the two Labour Governments had applied the test under the Poor Law and appear never to have contemplated its abolition.

Moreover, the Labour Government, in 1931, just before its resignation, had already agreed to economies which included the application of a Means Test to those of the unemployed who had been long out of work. What they deny having agreed to was a *family* Means Test.

Mr. J. H. Thomas recently infuriated some of the Labour M.P.s by saying—as he has often said before—"there is no leader sitting on that Front Bench who was a member of the Labour Government with me who dares to say that he opposed the Means Test." (*Hansard*, December 9th, 1935, col. 688.) Mr. George Lansbury thereupon intervened to explain exactly what happened in 1931 and what was the attitude of the Labour Government. He said:—

"While it is true, as I have said several times, that we were in favour of a Means Test, we were definitely and emphatically against putting the unemployed under the Poor Law, and thus bringing them within the Poor Law Means Test. . . . The unemployed who were receiving transitional payments never came under the Means Test until after the Economy Act, brought in by Lord Snowden, was passed by this House. . . . The able-bodied poor who came to the Poor Law were always under the Means Test. . . .—(Col. 696.)

In order that there may be no doubt about the attitude of the Labour Government in 1931, we may refer also to other authoritative statements. Speaking in the House of Commons on November 13th, 1931 (*Hansard*, November 13th, col. 446), Mr. Lansbury said:—

"As to the Means Test, the hon. Member knows as well as I do what is our attitude on the subject. I am not prepared to give people money year after

year without knowing what is their own personal position; that is to say, if a person has gone out of ordinary benefit and has means of his own to maintain himself, I am not prepared to pay him State money."

In keeping with this policy of favouring a Means Test, but not one based on family income, an *amendment* moved by Mr. Kirkwood at the Scarborough Conference of the Labour Party, 1931 (see Report, pages 206-209), which would have entirely abolished the Means Test for workers on transitional benefit, was defeated. The resolution which was carried was moved by Sir Stafford Cripps. It merely committed the Labour Party to the abolition of the "Poor Law tests," leaving the way open for a non-family Means Test.

The Labour Party's Election Address, 1935, cautiously promises to sweep away "the humiliating Means Test imposed by the National Government," but does not promise to abolish all means tests, either for Poor Law or for Unemployment pay.

### A Vital Question for Capitalism.

It does not require much examination to see why the question of Means Tests is a vital one for capitalism. Capitalism cannot exist without something which will drive the workers to submit themselves to exploitation for the benefit of the propertied class. That something is poverty and the threat of starvation. The capitalists must have always at their disposal the millions of wage-earners ready to be exploited in order to live. Once allow the able-bodied (*i.e.*, profit-producing) workers to have free access even to the most frugal necessities of life and capitalism is ended. For reasons of stability and the security of property the rulers must provide something for those workers whose services are not at the moment required, but it must be so hedged about by restrictions that it does not enable workers to receive from all sources more than will barely keep them alive. So the working class must not receive unemployment pay indefinitely without fathers and children being made to meet part of the cost; they must not be able to get Public Assistance while they or their relatives have means to keep them. Mrs. Sidney Webb, in her useful lecture on "The English Poor Law" (Oxford University Press, 1928, 1s.), gives an apt quotation from Patrick Colquhoun. He was living in the early 19th century, but the relative position of capitalists and workers has not changed since then:—

"Without a proportion of poverty there could be no riches, since riches are the offspring of labour, while labour can exist only from a state of poverty."

Poverty is, therefore, a most necessary and indispensable ingredient in society, without which nations and communities could not exist in a state of civilisation.

If we remember that for Mr. Colquhoun "civilisation" meant "capitalism," his statement is a good description of the facts; and, in passing, it is interesting to recall how Mr. Colquhoun proposed to enforce poverty. Mrs. Webb calls him



"the inventor of the modern system of preventive police," and one of the chief original purposes of the police system was to smash up workers' demonstrations without loss of life and without incurring the criticism which the use of troops always aroused. (See "British History in the 19th Century," G. M. Trevelyan, Longmans; 1922; p. 199.) The police came in useful when the starving agricultural labourers and textile operatives demonstrated against the effects of the Poor Law Act of 1834, which brought to an end the practice of subsidising low wages by Poor Relief.

Coming back to the present problem of the Means Test, it is conceivable that the Government could achieve the same purpose—that of compelling the workers to submit themselves for exploitation—without any kind of Means Test, family or otherwise, by applying much more harshly the remaining restrictions. The present method, however, has the advantage from their point of view that an unemployed man's relatives can usually be relied on to goad him into accepting any work, however ill-paid and uncongenial. How much more satisfactory that is to the Government than that the Government itself should be accused of driving unemployed into accepting work at all costs!

#### Only Socialism will abolish Means Tests

One thing is absolutely certain. Any political party which administers capitalism has got to find some means of *compelling* the workers to produce profit for the capitalists. Nothing but the alternative of starvation will do it. No appeal, whether in the name of patriotism, religion, social duty or anything else will serve the purpose. Capitalism is supported by force and will collapse if the force is withdrawn.

That explains why we can be sure that no Government, Liberal, Labour, Conservative, or any other, *which administers capitalism*, will abolish the Means Test without reintroducing it under another name or something of similar effect and equally obnoxious. That explains why the Labour Party and its spokesmen in the House of Commons do not undertake to abolish all Means Tests, but only to abolish the "family" Means Test, and even that they do not promise to abolish in relation to Public Assistance.

They may have the best intentions, but capitalism is based on class ownership, class struggle, class antagonism. The effort to keep the basis but humanise the administration may decrease somewhat the amount of human misery, but cannot solve the problem. It also increases the opposition of those who say that the workers abuse every concession made to them, and that, therefore, progress and Socialism are impossible.

Only Socialists have a solution. Society must get rid of the class basis and the system of wage-labour. It must be so organised that people are no longer offered the alternatives of being exploited or of striving to remain or become an exploiter. Wealth must be produced only for use and without the wealth producers being driven to their uncongenial tasks by the whip of starvation wielded by the ruling class and their governments.

The incentive must be the common appreciation that work, in which all will co-operate, will be for the good of all. Access to the necessities and comforts of life must be free. There will be no need for "means tests" for anyone. All will be members of society without privilege one over the other.

H.

## Shall the Workers Starve while waiting for Socialism

We have received the following letter:—

Walworth, S.E.19.  
11/11/35.

To the Editor of "Socialist Standard."

I have read current issue of S.S., and am amazed at the *entirely negative attitude the S.P.G.B. takes up, re reforms*, and the C.P. and Labour Party. The workers can't afford to fix their gaze on a long-distance telescopic view of a Socialist Commonwealth, and starve in the meantime, and *that is what the S.P.G.B. seems to imply*. Lenin, quoted by John Reed, in "Ten Days that Shook the World," stated, "If we have got to wait till all the people understand Socialism, then we won't get Socialism for 500 years." This is a quotation that the S.P.G.B. has consistently ignored. The *Socialists, under Lenin's leadership*, supported Reform after Reform, and these "Reforms" led up to the Revolution. In "Left-Wing Communism," chapter 6, Lenin says: "We can (and must) begin to build up Socialism, not with the fantastic human material especially created by our imagination, but with the material bequeathed to us by Capitalism. This, no doubt, is very 'difficult,' but any other approach to this task is not serious enough to deserve discussion." The "material" referred to means, of course, the "ordinary" people in Russia, the various reformers,

"Octobrists," the "Bund," "Cadets," etc., and *we have the same "types" here in England, i.e., Labour and I.L.P.* No Communist suggests that Reform *in itself* is revolutionary, but Communists do think that Reforms *may* lead to revolution, or be stepping stones to Socialism! The S.P.G.B. takes up a "rigid," "academical," Marxist view of the political situation, and keeps away from the everyday struggles of the workers, questions of relief work or full maintenance, strikes, etc., and in doing so will become "isolated," and degenerate into a mere sect, which would be a blow to the working-class movement, as the party has at least put over some good propaganda in the past.

Yours fraternally,  
ROBERT CHAPMAN.

Reply.

Mr. Chapman tells us what *he* thinks the attitude of the S.P.G.B. implies, then he sets out to prove it absurd—the ancient and honourable game of putting up and knocking down Aunt Sallies.

The S.P.G.B. has said consistently, year in, year out, that while capitalism persists the workers

will remain the victims of exploitation, poverty, insecurity, unemployment, etc., and that the only remedy is Socialism.

In the meantime as capitalism constantly expresses itself in new or aggravated forms (pauper old-age, excessive maternal mortality, stunted physique, unemployment among black-coated workers, etc., etc.), non-Socialist political parties and governments busy themselves with piecemeal reforms, what the late Mr. Wheatley described as "patching-up capitalism" when he was introducing for the Labour Government the Housing Act associated with his name. The S.P.G.B. does not deny that these patches partly alleviate for a time some of the particular expressions of the evil, but the evil itself will remain as long as capitalism. It is at that point we part company from the reformers who think that they can solve the problem within capitalism.

Mr. Chapman now tells us that the workers "can't afford to fix their gaze on a long distance telescopic view of a Socialist Commonwealth and starve in the meantime." Fortunately we do not have to deal with abstract theories in order to find out what happens when the workers do what Mr. Chapman wants them to do. We can see the results before our eyes. The present condition of the workers is the result of rejecting the S.P.G.B.'s advice to organise for Socialism. Instead of taking that advice the workers did what Mr. Chapman recommends. They refrained from thinking about Socialism, in order to support the parties which offered to patch up capitalism with reforms. The workers have been doing this ever since the S.P.G.B. was formed, and for long years before that.

We hope that Mr. Chapman is satisfied with the result, although curiously enough his letter nowhere deals with this very important aspect. Will he tell us that he is satisfied that the present condition of the workers justifies their past policy of struggling for reforms?

A number of other points call for comment. Mr. Chapman quotes Lenin to the effect that if we have got to wait till all the people understand Socialism then we won't get Socialism for 500 years. May we remind our correspondent that the S.P.G.B. was listening to this talk from members of the I.L.P. and others in 1904, long before Lenin used it. They and Lenin professed to have discovered a way of getting Socialism quickly, without waiting till a majority had been won over to Socialism. Very good, but where are the promised quick results? When is it going to begin? When are the Bolsheviks going to begin building up Socialism in Russia? And what kind of quick progress have the I.L.P. and Labour Party made in this country and elsewhere?

On one small point Mr. Chapman is wrong. He says we ignore this statement of Lenin's. He

will find it reproduced with comment in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for December, 1919.

Mr. Chapman quotes from *Left-Wing Communism* a passage which he applies to us. He has apparently forgotten what immediately precedes it. Lenin was attacking those who refuse to work in the trade unions, and who set up "brand new, simon-pure" rival unions. Then he goes on to make the statement quoted by Mr. Chapman. But the S.P.G.B. does neither of these things, and has never for one moment forgotten that we have to work with the material before us. It was not the S.P.G.B. who forgot it, but all the fat-headed Communists who thought in 1918 that they could establish Socialism in Russia in spite of the absence of Socialist human material.

Mr. Chapman, who presumably writes as a member of the Communist Party, tells us that "reforms may lead to revolution, or be stepping stones to Socialism." This is only his earlier statement put in different words. The world has seen (and in some cases "suffered") from thousands of reforms. Will Mr. Chapman tell us where these have proved stepping stones to Socialism?

Regarding everyday struggles, Mr. Chapman is wrong in saying that we keep away from them. The S.P.G.B. has always recognised the value of trade union organisation and struggles.

Lastly, Mr. Chapman tells us that "in the past" we put over some good propaganda, but now we are going to become isolated, and degenerate into a mere sect. We are sorry to have to reject this little piece of flattery. The implication is that the S.P.G.B. has changed, much to Mr. Chapman's sorrow. The change in us is only visible through the lens of Mr. Chapman's telescope of the imagination—or perhaps Mr. Chapman's own vision has become distorted?

ED. COMM.

#### LEYTON

### A SOCIAL

A Social will be held at 5 Upper Walthamstow Road (near Wood Street Station, L.N.E.R.), on Saturday, 4th January, commence 8 p.m. Free to all. Dancing, games, etc.

#### CAMBRIDGE

Will sympathisers willing to assist in forming a branch at Cambridge get in touch with the Secretary at 56, Kendal Way, Milton Road, Cambridge.

#### LEYTON

A Lecture will be delivered at Grove House, High Road, Leyton, on

Thursday, January 2nd, at 8 p.m.

"What does Socialism Mean?" Speaker—S. RUBIN  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion



## Socialists and Trade Unions

Several correspondents have written during recent months, criticising or inquiring about the Socialist attitude towards trade unions. The critics all object in greater or less degree to Socialists having anything whatever to do with the unions, although some of them say that apart from this question they are in full agreement with the S.P.G.B. A typical letter is that from Mr. W. T. H. Raynor. He regards the unions "both separately and as combined in the T.U.C.," as "amongst the great pillars of capitalism." Their officials are mostly supporters of the Labour Party and bitter opponents of the S.P.G.B.; they realise that in a Socialist community they would not be necessary; they seldom make an attack on the bosses, but spend a lot of time fraternising with them; they take "Honours" from capitalist Governments; they rise on the backs of the workers and do the bidding of the employers from morning till night; they support wars and act as recruiting agents; most of them support the Church, that other great pillar of capitalism. These and many other charges are made by Mr. Raynor, and still others by various correspondents.

What is our answer to all of this? We do not deny the accuracy of the bulk of the charges, many of them being recorded in the pages of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. We recognise that these things exist and that they are to be condemned. They are not, however, the whole or even the main aspect of trade unionism. Trade unions arise from the effort of the workers, by means of combination, to defend themselves against the employers and to improve their bargaining position in the ceaseless struggle over the sale of the workers' labour-power. In order to justify the existence of trade unions, it is not necessary to try to show that they are Socialist in outlook (which they are not), or that they are devoting their powers to the overthrow of capitalism (which again they are not doing). All that it is necessary to show is that the resistance of the workers, their organisation and strikes, are factors which influence the level of wages, working conditions, hours, etc. In short, if the workers did not combine, particularly in the industries where workers are trained comparatively quickly and easily, their standard of living would be lower than it is, and they would be more at the mercy of the individual employer than they are with organisation. Even if there may be unions which do not justify their existence on these grounds, we hold that trade unionism can still serve this function and therefore must not be opposed by Socialists. The unions, if any, which serve no useful purpose at all, are, of course, another matter.

To say, as Mr. Raynor does, that the outlook and conduct of the leaders is often indistinguish-

able from that of avowed defenders of capitalism, is only the same thing as saying that the workers in the trade unions are not Socialists and therefore do not demand of their officials that they shall be Socialists. That has always been so, whether the leaders were Tories, Liberals or Radicals, as in the nineteenth century, or Labour Party supporters or I.L.P.ers, as in post-War years. It makes little real difference what the leaders are. If some of them privately held Socialist views they could do little to give practical effect to their views. They would be elected, like their Liberal or Labour fellows, on the kind of grounds that appeal to the non-Socialist trade union members. The way to make the unions more effective is to make more Socialists, and until that has been done the non-Socialists, who are the majority, will continue to dominate in selecting officials and in determining their conduct and the policy of the unions. In the meantime Socialists, understanding as they do the limitations of trade union activity and the need and the way to abolish capitalism, have to push on with Socialist propaganda. Inside the unions they can usefully illustrate the Socialist case by referring to trade union experience.

ED. COMM.

## "THE TIMES" AND "THE SOCIALIST STANDARD"

Mr. Jackson Dodds in his presidential address to the Canadian Bankers Association, at Montreal, on November 14th, referred to an article published in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD of April, 1935, opposing bank nationalisation and credit-creationist illusions. Mr. Dodds made due acknowledgment, but when the City Editor of the *Times* commented on the speech and on THE SOCIALIST STANDARD article (*Times*, November 18th), he used the term "Socialist Party" when he meant Labour Party, and thus made it appear that THE SOCIALIST STANDARD represents the views of a section of the Labour Party. When his attention was drawn to this, the Editor published a correction (*Times*, December 9th). We draw attention to this because in recent years the habit of using the term "Socialist Party" to describe the Labour Party has become more widespread in the London Press, although the *Times* is generally careful not to do so. Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD who come across this misleading use of the name "Socialist Party" would be doing a useful piece of work if they wrote to the editor of the newspaper concerned pointing out how confusing it is.

The Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, when the point was raised with him recently, expressed his willingness to avoid the practice.

ED. COMM.

## NEW PREMISES

While efforts are being made to find suitable premises into which to move our headquarters when our lease expires during this year, our efforts are hampered by financial considerations. If we can accumulate a substantial fund—£300 is aimed at—we can take on the responsibility of larger premises. We need larger premises owing to our extending activities, but we cannot afford to take a lease unless the financial obstacle is first overcome. Donations so far have been fairly satisfactory, but we still have a long way to go to reach £300.

Please forward your donation, large or small, to the Treasurer, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

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## DEATH OF COMRADE BENTLEY

We are informed that an old member of the Party, Comrade A. Bentley, of Paddington Branch, has gone on his last journey. He was always a sturdy advocate and defender of the Party's principles. At times he was inclined to be bitter, but this was doubtless due to the fact that he was crippled, although tall and strongly built. The same reason kept him out of the Party for a number of years, but he rejoined later. In or out of the Party his attitude and enthusiasm were always the same. He will be remembered by earlier members as "Ben Carthurs."

## MANCHESTER

Public Meetings, Sundays at 7.30. CRAIGWEIL CAFE, PETER STREET (opp. Theatre Royal).

Jan. 5	"Economic Causes of Crime"	MOSES BARITZ
12	"Debate with Fascist"	
19	"History of the British Empire"	G. CLIFFORD
26	"Russian Music, Past and Present" (Gramophone Recital and Lecture)	MOSES BARITZ

Admission free. Questions and Discussion. All invited.

## MANCHESTER

### A DEBATE

A Debate will take place at Craigweil Cafe, Peter Street (opposite Theatre Royal), on

SUNDAY, 12th JANUARY, at 7.30 p.m.

"Which Party shall the Working Class Support—the British Union of Fascists or the S.P.G.B."

For the B.U.F.	M. GOULDING
For the S.P.G.B.	ROBERTUS

Admission free

All invited

## ILFORD

A Lecture will be given at Mayfair Cafe, 96 Cranbrook Road, Ilford.

Sunday, 12th January, at 3 p.m.

"Socialism and Religion" Speaker to be announced  
All invited Admission free Questions and discussion

## EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

ADMISSION FREE

At HEAD OFFICE

Sundays 4.0 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Jan. 5	No Lecture		
12	"Spain and Portugal"	M. CAMERON	
19	"Wages"	CALLIS	
26	"Italy"	HARDY	
Feb. 2	"Competition"	KOHN	

## At BATTERSEA BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8.0 p.m., at Latchmere Road Baths, Small Waiting Room (Burns Road).

Jan. 2	"American History"	REGINALD
16	"General Strikes"	SANDY
30	"Modern Religion"	REGINALD

## At CHISWICK BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays at 8 p.m., at 376, High Road, Chiswick (opposite Turnham Green).

Jan. 2	"French Revolution"	BARITZ
16	"Science and M.C.H."	WILMOT
30	No Lecture	

## At STEPNEY BRANCH

Alternate Fridays, 8 p.m., at Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel Road (opposite London Hospital).

Jan. 3	"History of Trade Unionism"	HARDY
10	"Causes and Consequences of 1914 War"	CAMERON
17	"Theories of Value before Marx"	GOLDSTEIN
31	"Marxian Theory of Value"	CALLIS

## At DAGENHAM BRANCH

Fridays at 8 p.m., at Ralph's Café, 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath.

Jan. 3	"Ancient Religion"	STEWART
10	"Modern Religion"	STEWART
17	"Science and M.C.H."	M. CAMERON
24	"History of T.U.s"	LAKE
31	"History of Parliament"	HARDY

## At SOUTHEND BRANCH

One Wednesday each month, at 8 p.m.

Jan. 15	"History of T.U.s"	FLOWER
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## At LEWISHAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road.

Jan. 2	"General Strikes"	SANDY
16	"History of T.U."	LAKE
30	"Theories of Value before Marx"	ISBITSKY

## At WEST HAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate.

Jan. 9	"American History"	REGINALD
24	"General Strikes"	ISBITSKY

## INDEX TO "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

A printed Index for volume 31 (16 months ended December, 1935) is on sale, price 2d. (post free 2½d.). Order from Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or nearest branch.

Copies of the Index for volumes 29 and 30 are also on sale.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY,



1936

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Mangling of Abyssinia

Towards the end of December events moved fast in the Abyssinian War, and it is impossible to foretell what further developments may have taken place by the time this issue is in print. Fresh from an electoral victory fought on a pledge that "the League of Nations will remain, as heretofore, the keystone of British foreign policy," Mr. Baldwin's Government was found to be trying to force on the Abyssinian Emperor peace terms which would mean giving to Mussolini almost more than he could have hoped for with final success in battle; terms which in the words of the *Times* (December 18th) "contradict everything that has been said by the Government about the requirements of a just and honourable settlement." The duplicity of the Anglo-French politicians was shown at its worst by the disclosure that after the Emperor had been induced to accept the terms because of the one gain—an outlet to the sea—he was to be told that the terms did not include permission to build a railway there. In face of the unexpectedly great opposition to the peace plan in influential circles at home and abroad the Government capitulated to the extent of dropping the plan and sacrificing Sir Samuel Hoare. It is now more than ever certain that the honest Mr. Baldwin—"You can trust me"—had planned something like this long enough ago, and hastened on the Election in order to get that over before the peace plan need become generally known. *Time*, the American journal, wrote on October 14th that the British, French and Italian Governments were already negotiating a settlement on the following lines:—

(1) Italy to hold her conquest of Ethiopia within moderate limits and in no case to attack the region of Lake Tana, where the British Empire has vital interests; (2) Italy to endure without armed retort

economic and financial sanctions, which the League of Nations must impose or utterly lose face; (3) France and Britain to block the League from voting military or naval sanctions and participate in an "open door" exploitation of Ethiopia in their "spheres of influence"; (4) Mutual understanding that there will be cheating all round on the "economic sanctions," with European States who have wares to sell to the belligerents disposing of them through private smugglers, these to take their chances of being caught and punished.

It is remarkably close to what actually did take place, so close that it seems impossible that it was merely an intelligent anticipation. Moreover, late in November rumour was busy in Rome with accounts of some such plan.

So much for that. The capitalist interests which in 100 years had robbed, tortured and murdered almost the whole of Africa into submission, were gathered round to subdue the last stronghold of native independence. Only the credulous believed that the powers which controlled the League would rise above capitalist motives and greeds. Socialists have no occasion to lament the inevitable: they have more important things to do. For Socialists the thing that matters is the overthrow of exploitation in Italy, Abyssinia and everywhere else on the earth's surface. Whether the Abyssinian masses are to be exploited by Italian or French or British capital or by native-born Abyssinians is—for the workers—not worth fighting about, any more than is the question of the supposed rights or wrongs of the Italian dispute with the British and French Governments. It may be true, as the Italian ruling class allege, that the bribe promised them in the Great War for hurling the Italian workers into the carnage included generous colonial concessions in E. Africa, and that this has not been fulfilled. What of it? What has that to do with the working class and their interests?

What should the workers do about the Abyssinian War? The attitude of the Socialist Party has been made plain enough. The workers have no interest at stake in the wars between ruling class national groups. It is their tragedy that they have not yet seen through the deceitful or muddled arguments used to mislead them. Mussolini, that master of bluff, mocks his working class dupes with the assurance that they are too clever to be bluffed: "Forty million people will not allow themselves to be mystified or bluffed." Then, like any jingo Labour Leader in the other lands, he tells the Italian workers that it is a working class war! "It is a war of the poor, of the disinherited, of the proletariat" (*Times*, December 19th, and *Evening Standard*, December 18th).

Opposed to Mussolini are the leaders of the Trade Union and Labour Movements of the West European countries. They are preparing the workers' minds for war should the governments eventually decide on that. The *Daily Herald*,

[Continued on page 16]

## A Letter from Russia

(The letter below is translated from "Here zulo," an Esperanto journal published in Paris.

The letter is dated November 15th, 1935, and is written from Russia. Owing to the savage repression of Socialist and other opponents of the Communist Party, the name and address of the writer are not given. The letter is useful as a reminder that independent views still gain expression in spite of the Dictatorship.)

ALTHOUGH I do not doubt that you certainly have sent me "heretical" literature, yet, if by chance this letter reaches you, it will show that I have received nothing from you for the past two months—absolutely nothing. I should like to pour out my indignation concerning this grave-like home of orthodoxy in which I am compelled to live—with a mask over my face. You will understand that the more indignant one may be, the more necessary it is outwardly to exhibit approval of the régime, and to cry loudly on every occasion, "Long Live Stalin the Great!" But this pouring out of indignation would avail nothing, and I know that you prefer concrete, exact facts and figures. Therefore, you will find on the other side a table, which I compiled from the most trustworthy sources and which relates to prices at the beginning of October. You can prepare a similar table of prices in Paris, and in that way will be able to judge the standard of living of the Soviet working-class as it is eighteen years after its "emancipa-

tion." [This table, and a similar one compiled for France, are excluded for reasons of space. They show that average wages in Russia will buy much less food than can be bought by average wages in France.

The comparison is, however, incomplete, because it does not take into account the low rents in Russia and the services provided free of cost.—ED. COMM.]

However, I cannot refrain from saying that this low standard of living is not the worst side of our "socialist" régime; at least, so far as I myself am concerned. In the main, I long for freedom of speech and of meeting; I am sick to death with "officialism." But—and that possibly will be the most terrible news to you—more and more people here lose the desire for liberty: the new generation does not even understand what liberty means to you and me. Its chief care and desire is only to follow precisely the instructions from the Kremlin.

In the schools they are shamelessly reintroducing the old, traditional method of teaching, with strict discipline for the scholars. And it will appear to you very characteristic that there is great agitation to put all the scholars into uniforms. Soon our schools will be like barracks. In the Army also, discipline becomes more and more strict. Recently, they even re-established the old ranks, so that "Comrade" Vorosilov is now a Marshal! In every way they popularise him by means of articles and pictures. On

the specimen postcard accompanying this letter you can admire his fat, jovial and self-satisfied face, and his breast decorated with eight orders.

What also characterises our present régime is

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



the widespread campaign of so-called "udarniks," whose task is to speed-up production and secure a record output.

The new kind of exploitation under our State capitalism has reached such a degree that in some places workers, in their resentment, have attacked these record-breakers. Of course, the result has been that the suppression has been intensified. I knew working conditions in Czarist times, and can assure you that the working-class were less driven then than now (literally "their sweat was more precious then than now").

Not only was their sweat more precious, but their lives also. With regard to that, judge for yourself from the following information, which is printed in black and white in *Izvestia*, on November 10th, 1935. Nozdin, a railway conductor, was condemned to death and executed because he caused a collision between two trains. Note that no lives were lost, and that the accident occurred between goods trains. Under the Czarist régime such a monstrous punishment would not have been possible, nor, I am sure, would it be possible in any other

country. Our technical experts are more heartless than aristocrats or plutocrats.

Possibly it would be wiser for me to forget these things, ignore what is around me, and simply enjoy the privileged situation which I personally happen to have. But I just cannot forget that we made a revolution in order to stop the exploitation of men by men, and that the result is quite different from what we aimed at. If only our experience could teach the Western working-class! But it seems not so, as our exploiters are still considered by you to be revolutionaries.

Dear comrade, pardon the bitter tone of my letter, and only remember this: on no account and at no time should workers resign the right of free speech and of meeting freely; under no excuse and in no circumstances ought they to consent to their trade unions and co-operative movements becoming part of the State apparatus, and consequently instruments in the hands of exploiting leaders; no-how should they permit the re-establishment, under any kind of guise whatsoever, of that which aims at destroying the revolution.

## Notes by the Way

### The Tory Working Man

A correspondent writing to the *Daily Telegraph* on December 9th, 1935, claimed that the Tory Party is the working men's party. "I am a London 'bus conductor," he writes. "I find no 'snobbishness' in my party. There is always a handshake, whether at a special function or a political meeting. . . . Anyone who is under the impression that the Conservatives do not want the working man is very much mistaken."

It is the 'bus conductor who is mistaken. Of course the Tories "want the working man." They want his vote, his consent to the continuation of the exploitation of working men by the class which controls the Tory Party.

And to think that they get all that simply at the cost of a handshake!

### Five Families own half Japan

Japan has not been backward in copying all the capitalist evils of the European lands. The *Financial Digest* (London, October 3rd, 1935) quotes from *Vanity Fair* an interesting account of the concentration of ownership in the hands of a small number of family groups.

Five of these family corporations are reputed to own more than half of Japan's actual wealth, barring the fortune of the Imperial House and the money in the National Treasury, and they control nine-tenths of the nation's industry and shipping. There is no opposition, real or implied, between "big business" and the government as there is here. Business, partly out of reverent patriotism and partly by command of the Emperor and the military clique, is conducted for one end—the greater glory of the nation. No rich man is criticised for making too

much money, since by tradition he lives simply, and his profits are put into things that mean national glory, whether they be art treasures or new factories.

The talk about living simply and not being mere money-grabbers is one of those misleading half-truths used by capitalism's apologists everywhere. One of the families is the Mitsui family, the head being Baron Mitsui. What frugal living means for him can be gathered from another quotation from the same source:—

Baron Mitsui lives in a private park among fragrant pine trees and placid lotus ponds in the middle of Tokyo—a city of five million people. His residence is a symbol of the personal frugality of his clan—a low wooden house in a style half Japanese, half European. Connected is a splendid marble palace, his private museum and guest house.

### A Sidelight on Fascism

When recently Signor Carlo Feltrinelli, one of Italy's captains of industry, died the *Times* (December 3rd) disclosed that he was stated to have been worth 800 million lire—upwards of £13 million. Fascism under Mussolini breeds paupers and millionaires as prolifically as any other variety of capitalism.

### The Three Sir Stafford Cripps's

Judging from the speeches reported from time to time there appear to be two, if not three, Sir Stafford Cripps's.

One of them is the loyal Labour Party member touching his hat to the monarchy, repudiating all suggestion that he disagrees with his party, and calling on all workers to rally round it. This one

(*Daily Herald*, November 2nd, 1935) rejects as absurd the notion that he had interpreted Labour Party policy as meaning confiscation of the means of production. "I have never said such a thing in my life." The Labour Party, he says, stands for compensation, in order to give the owners an opportunity "of adapting themselves to the new form of society you want to create."

(How you can enable people to adjust themselves to a system of society in which there is no exploitation by allowing the exploiters to go on exploiting he does not say.)

The second one (*Daily Herald*, November 30th) said:—

We may well find ourselves as a Party, forced by a war situation into the "Nationalist" Government. If that happens I don't think the Party will ever emerge as an effective political Party.

The lesson of the election is not to beware of Socialism, and become more respectable within capitalism, but rather forward to Socialism and damn capitalist respectability.

The third one, although he fought as Labour candidate and is therefore committed to the Labour proposal of retaining capitalism while adorning it with a string of reforms, said (*Daily Telegraph*, November 30th):—

"If capitalism is to continue the workers are more likely to get what they want by keeping the National Government than by having any other government. . . . The National Government has done quite well in this country. It cannot be said that, from the capitalistic point of view, it has failed, and it is reasonable to say that it has met with a considerable measure of success. There is really very little case at all for an alternative government within the capitalistic system."

### The Overloading of Ships for Profit

It is worth while to place on record the judgment in the case of the ship "La Crescenta," which sank with heavy loss of life.

Lord Merrivale, the Wreck Commissioner, delivered judgment in London yesterday on the causes of the loss of the ship "La Crescenta." He held that the causes of the loss were contributed to by the wrongful acts and defaults of the owners and managers, and the owners were ordered to pay a total of £3,400 costs. A contributory cause, Lord Merrivale said, was the overloading of the ship, so that when her motive power was put out of action she inevitably sank in the face of precipitous seas.

"La Crescenta" disappeared in the Pacific Ocean last December while on a voyage from San Luis, California, to Osaka, Japan, and the crew of 29 were lost. (*Times*, December 12th.)

One noteworthy point is the action of the captain as disclosed in his letter to his wife.

Lord Merrivale said:—

"The master, Captain Upstill, overloaded at the express bidding of those who represented his employers, Sydney Graham and Ralph Henry Holland. He realised the peril, but employment was precarious, and the directions he got could hardly have been misunderstood. When in January, 1934, he received a letter with an order to 'load as much cargo as you possibly can,' he drafted a reply, as he wrote to his wife, in which he said: 'He was not going to overload for anybody.' This is shown by the evidence of the witness Rogers, given on the fourth day of the

hearing. Upstill, however, shrank from the refusal he had at first proposed to make. Such a refusal would probably have resulted in his becoming unemployed."

How this shows up the common capitalist argument that capitalism makes for efficiency and safety by placing the best men in positions of authority. Captain Upstill may have been the best man for the job all right, but he was a wage-slave afraid that his capitalist masters might throw him on the industrial scrap heap.

### "Our" Empire—a few Miscellaneous Quotations

Destruction of the German Colonial System, with a view to the future security of all communications vital to the British Empire. This has already been done—an achievement of enormous value which ought not to be endangered at the peace negotiations. —(General Smuts on what the workers fought for 1914-1918. Vol. III. of Lloyd George's "War Memoirs.")

The British Government, with good reason, moved men-of-war and troops to protect *our* property in the Mediterranean.—(Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express*, October 21st, 1935. Italics ours.)

To ease the European situation no step would be more effective than the transfer to Germany of the mandates of their former German colonies in Africa now expressly under the administration of the British Government.—(Lord Rothermere's *Daily Mail*, March 31st, 1934—repeated from March 21st, 1934.)

It was a shock to find to-day that Lord Rothermere has resumed his advocacy of returning to Germany the African colonies taken from her after the war. . . . All who have the interests of the Empire at heart can only deplore this declaration. —(Lord Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard*, March 21st, 1934.)

The fate of Abyssinia showed what would happen to Britain upon a frightful scale if we were unable to defend ourselves. Not only should we be *stripped of every possession*, but even in our own island we should be subjected to foreign intervention and restraint.—(Mr. Winston Churchill. *Daily Telegraph*, November 2nd, 1935. Italics ours.)

### Why Indian Frontier Tribes Fight

The following extracts are from a letter written by Dr. M. R. Soni, M.B., to the *Manchester Guardian* (October 25th, 1935).

Sir,—As one who has resided a long time in the North-west Frontier Province of India, I wish to say a few words concerning the subject of bombing the frontier tribesmen from the air.

The frontier trouble began 150 years ago when the British rulers decided to extend the frontiers of India in order to safeguard the country against a possible attack by Russia. The frontier tribes were driven back into the inhospitable hills, where there is hardly a yard of fertile land available.

The remedy does not lie in building more aeroplanes and dropping deadlier bombs on women and children, but in withdrawing to the eastern bank of the Indus, thereby allowing the wild tribesmen to come down from the hills and live peacefully on the fertile plains, where once their forefathers lived.

### Stalin on Socialism

Those who read the speeches of Russian Communists and do not bear in mind that when they



use the word "Socialism" they are not intending to convey what we mean by the word, often find the speeches confusing.

The following extract from a speech by Stalin, delivered at a conference at the Kremlin, November 14th-17th, 1935, will make clear his use of the terms and also his view on developments in Russia.

In a Socialist society each works according to his abilities and receives articles of consumption, not according to his needs, but according to the work which he has performed for society. This means that the cultural-technical level of the working class is still not high, the difference between mental and manual labour continues to exist. The productivity of labour is not yet sufficiently high to insure an abundance of articles of consumption, so that society is forced to distribute articles of consumption not in accordance with the needs of the members of society, but in accordance with the work performed by them for society.

Communism represents a higher stage of development. In the Communist society each works according to his abilities and receives articles of consumption, not in accordance with the work performed by him, but in accordance with the needs that a culturally-developed person has. This means that a cultural-technical level of the working class has become sufficiently high to undermine the foundation of the difference between mental labour and manual labour, that the difference between them has already disappeared, and the productivity of labour has risen to such a high degree that it can insure a complete abundance of articles of consumption so that society is able to distribute these articles in accordance with the needs of its members.

Some people think that the difference between mental and manual labour can be eliminated by means of a certain cultural-technical levelling of the workers engaged in mental and manual labour by lowering the cultural-technical level of the engineers and technicians, of workers engaged in mental labour, to the level of medium skilled workers. That is absolutely wrong.

Only petty-bourgeois prattlers can think in that way of Communism. In reality the difference between mental and manual labour can be eliminated only by elevating the cultural-technical level of the working class to the level of the workers engaged in engineering-technical labour.

It would be ridiculous to assume that such elevation cannot be achieved. It is quite realisable in the conditions existing under the Soviet system, where the productive forces of the country are freed from the fetters of capitalism, where labour is freed from the yoke of exploitation, where the working class is in power, and the younger generation of the working class has every opportunity to secure for itself a sufficient technical education.—(*News Bulletin*, Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, December 6th, 1935.)

Whatever justification the Bolsheviks think they have for their misuse of the term Socialism—by which they mean what is actually "State Capitalism"—the effect is wholly bad for Socialist propaganda. The argument itself is only an elaboration of the vulgar capitalist doctrine that we should all work harder and become rich under capitalism. H.

#### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

## Do Men Make Good Maids?

The trouble about housekeeping is that it is hard work. Quite a number of people dislike hard work. Too bad! But what shall we do? Why, ring up the local Labour Exchange and explain that you require the services of somebody who likes hard house-work, and will they kindly send along a couple of engineers or bricklayers—or even musicians or electricians would do. The point is—can they make beds, make cakes, make clothes, lay table, wait at table, polish table, grow, peel and cook vegetables, drive car, mend car, mind car, mind their own business? In short, can the Labour Exchange supply a Chinese coolie, black boy, Persian slave, and magician all rolled into one gentlemanly Britisher? YES! It can be done. It is being done.

News comes from Blackpool that unemployed men are being trained as domestic workers. Men servants are already taking the place of women in hundreds of homes throughout the country. . . . The men were more willing workers than the women I had employed before. . . . My present cook was trained to be an engineer, but could not get a job. . . . Two men do the work of a chauffeur, gardener, cook, housemaid, parlourmaid, handyman, valet, kennelman and housekeeper. . . . If women find themselves without work in the future they will have only themselves to blame. (*Evening Standard*, August 21st, 1935.)

Now girls, pull your socks up! The men are cornering your rightful work! They are not doing it because the warehouses are full and the markets glutted—oh, no!—but because they have "a flair for house tasks." Thus smugly does the *Evening Standard* gloss over the fact that skivvy-ing, whether by men or women, is no more than a modern form of chattel slavery. It is the unemployment inevitable under capitalism which goads men into enduring this form of exploitation, to which women to-day—in spite of their training and traditions—prefer even factory conditions.

We maintain that under Socialism this and all other methods of exploitation will be abolished.

If men and women find themselves without Socialism in the future "they will have only themselves to blame." D. S.

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturdays in each month.

Jan. 18th. 3 p.m. South Kensington (Science) Museum  
"CHEMISTRY AND COMMERCE" CAMERON

Feb. 1st. 3 p.m. London Museum STEWART  
"LONDON HISTORY"

The Evolution of Shipping and its relationship with the past and present systems of society was clearly demonstrated by Comrade Kersley at the Science Museum on December 7th. At the Horniman Museum on December 21st, Comrade Reginald gave an extremely interesting lecture on Evolution to a small group of listeners including some non-members.

The appreciation of the wealth of information which can be obtained from these visits is shown by the regular attendance.

## Book Review

"Labour's Way to Use the Land. Tom Williams, M.P. (Methuen, London. 2s. 6d.)

This addition to the "Labour Shows the Way Series" is a useful contribution to "Labour's" main task of showing the capitalists the way to run capitalism. It deals, as its title indicates, with the agricultural side of capitalist production, and argues with considerable ingenuity that all the efforts of the other capitalist parties are and must be in vain, and that the millennium for the farmer, the farm labourer, and the consumer lies in the crania of the Labour "experts."

Well, we can leave the interested parties to fight that out. The madness of all these reformers has its methods, like other madness, but which is the best—or the worst—is of no interest to the Socialist.

The latter must criticise a work of this nature and origin from a different standpoint altogether. He sees it as the production of a sect professing—when expediency does not forbid—to be Socialist. His duty, therefore, is to "plunge the (Socialist) test-rod in" and "speak as he finds."

And in this case it must be unequivocal repudiation, for the book is nothing but a barefaced attempt to snatch political support from the farming element on one hand, and from the industrial and clerical wage-slave on the other.

The exposition of working-class politics should show that behind all this talk of organising the marketing of agricultural products lies the old, old story of the struggle between the industrial capitalist and the agriculturalist to determine how cheaply the latter can be compelled to feed the former's human cattle.

It should show that the industrial wage-workers are about as much interested in this struggle as the ox is in the bidding of rival butchers for his carcase.

It should stress almost beyond all things, that wages depend in the long run on the cost of food and other necessities; and that therefore the attempt to inveigle them into this struggle between the producers of their food and the ultimate purchasers (who are their paymasters) is seduction pure and simple.

History provides confirmation of this in the Corn Law struggle of the middle of last century. With a heavy import duty on wheat, and the loaf at a shilling, the farmers were well off, and the manufacturers were not doing so bad. But the working class position was one of appalling misery. The sufferings of their wage-slaves so rent the tender hearts of the manufacturers that they nobly rallied to the cause of the bottom dog. They backed the demand for the abolition of the Corn Law. The law was abolished; and in a few years the workers were in just the same plight as before:

their wages adjusted themselves to the "cheap loaf."

But the fortunes of the industrial magnates waxed marvellously, while those of the farmers waned in proportion.

The proposal to nationalise the land, and so bring the farmers into the direct service of the industrialists, as the Post Office workers are, may be sufficiently alluring to the hard-headed men of the soil to catch their votes—the present scribe cannot tell. But at all events, this land nationalisation is the only definite thing in the book. For all its criticism of the existing marketing schemes, it has nothing better to offer. A few pages of "constructive" wind and piffle, a list of "Boards" and "Commissions"—that is all. What these Boards and Commissions are to do, and how and when and why, we are not told. To venture any further than the author has done would have been dangerous, hence, as Educated Evans would have said, its all "gaswork."

A. E. J.

## Nottingham and Derby

Will all sympathisers willing to help form a branch of the Party locally please communicate with General Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1.

## HEAD OFFICE

Lectures are given each Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

Jan. 5 "Labour's Pranks in Parliament" - WILMOT  
12 "Education—A Socialist's View" - REGINALD  
19 "Has Socialism failed in Russia?" - RUBIN  
26 "Crime and Socialism" - GINSBERG

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

## BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty Street (corner of Guildford Street, W.C.1).

Jan. 6 "The Weakness of Trade Unions" - ROBERTUS  
13 "What about the Middle Class" (Open Discussion)  
20 "Has the Communist International Failed?" CASH  
27 "Can Man Master the Machine?" - WILMOT  
Feb. 4 "Has Lenin improved on Marx?" - RUBIN

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

## LEICESTER

A Lecture under the auspices of the Leicester Secular Society will be given at THE SECULAR HALL

on SUNDAY, JANUARY 26th, at 6.30 p.m.

Speaker - A. KOHN

Subject—"Socialism, Atheism and Religion"

Questions and Discussion. Meeting closes at 8 p.m.



## Engels on Housing

"The Housing Question," F. Engels. (Martin Lawrence, 2s. 6d.)

**N**UMEROUS people who pride themselves upon their practical outlook and their absorption in so-called immediate issues would do well to read and inwardly digest this little book. Written originally as a series of articles in a German workers' periodical, over sixty years ago, it refers in particular to propositions made by two of the author's contemporaries, viz., Proudhon, the French father of anarchism, and a certain less notable Dr. Sax, whom Engels selects as representing the typical capitalist reformer. Though the former claimed to be a revolutionary, his ideal resembled, with striking closeness, that of the reformer. Both proposed that the worker should own his own house. Proudhon suggested that, after a number of years' payment of rent, the house should become the property of the tenant; this result was to be achieved by legislation. Sax, on the other hand, favoured Building Societies as a means of arriving at the goal.

Engels had no difficulty in showing the Utopian character of the plans of both these practical people; and further that even to the extent that the workers could and did own their own houses at that time, in Germany and elsewhere, this was the reverse of helpful to them. Once the workers became drawn into the orbit of capitalism every piece of small property in houses or land became a tie which hampered their freedom of movement in times of industrial change. At the same time, the fact that they lived rent-free merely meant that their wages were correspondingly low.

Nowadays only the élite of the working class i.e., those with permanent jobs and comfortable salaries can seriously think of becoming house-owners, and even these can often be found looking at the cracks in the ceiling and speculating as to which will terminate first, the payments or the house.

The stimulus given to industry by the war led to a rapid flow of population from the country to the towns in certain areas, and hence arose the acute post-war housing shortage. This type of shortage can be remedied in time by the operation of normal economic processes under capitalism plus State action through the local authorities. What cannot be remedied, however, is the chronic inferiority of working-class accommodation due to the poverty of the workers, a condition they share with the oppressed classes through the ages. This can disappear only through the transformation of the means of living into the common property of all.

Engels brought these points out very clearly and showed conclusively that no piecemeal treatment of isolated "questions" such as housing could

achieve any permanent solution. Slums are destroyed in one district only to appear in another, for the poverty which lies at the root of the slum is not abolished by the mere transportation of the poor. Engels shows up also the severely practical nature of the interest which the ruling class take from time to time in slum clearing.

Apart from the danger of epidemics, which do not always spare the wealthy, the time comes when all the cunning of the rack-renter fails to extract more than a certain amount from the tenants of certain property. The demand for larger, centrally-situated emporiums, banks, theatres, railway stations and traffic accommodation generally, grows and forces the workers' homes towards the circumferences of the big cities. These factors are as evident to-day as when Engels wrote; but just how rapidly our rulers move in such matters may be measured by those who remember that it is just about thirty years ago since Lloyd George told us that if, when the Liberal Party were returned to office, they did not sweep the slums from the land within three years they would deserve to be swept from office. The ruling class are still sweeping slums away, and will, no doubt, be doing so on the eve of the revolution.

The point of Engels' book is that the solution of the housing problem, as of all problems that affect the workers, lies in the hands of the workers themselves. They cannot afford to leave it to their masters to solve whether by legislation or by Building Societies. They only need to conquer political power in order to remove at once the barriers to healthier and roomier houses.

The reappearance of the book is, therefore, timely, and should in Engels' own words "provide proof of how impractical these so-called 'practical' Socialists really are."

E. B.

### SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Head Office and Headquarters of the Socialist Party in Canada, 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.

Will all those interested in the development of a revolutionary Socialist Party, and desirous of obtaining further information, write to the official Secretary, F. Neale, 179, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.?

Those requiring books or pamphlets on Socialism, or wish to subscribe to the SOCIALIST STANDARD, official organ of the S.P. of G.B. (subscription rates, 75 cents a year), write to Literature Agent, c/o F. Neale, 179, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg.

### MR. CRAIK AND THE N.C.L.C.

We have received the following letter from the Secretary of the National Council of Labour Colleges.

Dear Sir,

In your December issue in an article by Robertus, you state that Mr. W. W. Craik was at one time a principal of the National Council of Labour Colleges. I don't quite know what is meant by "a principal of the National Council of Labour Colleges." Mr. Craik has never been the principal or the president, or even a member of the executive of the N.C.L.C. What your writer had perhaps in mind was that Mr. Craik was at one time principal of the Labour College, London, for which I may say the N.C.L.C. had no responsibility.

I shall be much obliged if you will give space to this correction.

Yours faithfully,  
J. P. M. MILLAR,  
General Secretary.

### FREEDOM UNDER CAPITALISM

One of the stock objections to Socialism is that its establishment will sound the death knell of the "glorious freedom and independence of the individual" to be found under capitalism. Apart from the absurdity of talking of freedom of the individual in present-day society, where the vast majority must sell their only possession (their mental and physical ability to work) in order to obtain food, clothing and shelter, we consider that these critics should first remove the beam from their own eye.

The following is not a description of an imaginary visit to a Socialist society, but is part of a broadcast talk by Captain V. A. Cazalet, M.P., on the Bata Shoe Co. (reprinted in *The Listener*, December 4th, 1935).

I got somewhat the same impression as I did when I went round Ford's works in Detroit—a sense of such ceaseless concentration and such tremendous efficiency that it was hardly human. At times it was difficult to remember that the workers were human beings and not mere machines—or, rather, parts of some great mechanical contrivance.

Going round almost any factory to-day one so often feels it would be a relief if only all the buildings were not so exactly alike, and if only all the workers' houses were not so identically the same. *Just a little individualism, just a little human diversity would be a welcome relief.* (Our italics.)

We do not suggest that in a society where the means of wealth production are commonly owned we shall return to the hand-made shoes of the village cobbler; but where the profit motive was absent even machine production could be made far more congenial than the horrible monotony of the present-day factory system, where the worker spends his life repeating the same simple operation.

G. H. A.

### AN EARLY NOTE ON KARL MARX

"Karl Marx" has been a name of world-wide significance when Marx was still a comparatively young man. The following quotation is an indication of this and is taken from the "Life of Horace Greeley," by J. Parton, published in 1855. Parton was describing the editorial staff of an American journal; in the course of the description the following passage occurs:—

"Mr. Dana enters with a quick, decided step, goes straight to his desk in the green carpeted sanctum sanctorum, and is soon lost in the perusal of 'Karl Marx.'" GILMAC.

### A HANDY SERIES OF PAMPHLETS

Modern Books, Ltd., have published a series of pamphlets on the recently-held Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. Any one who is interested in studying the new turn taken by Communist policy, support of the League of Nations, and the Labour Party, and towards helping democratic capitalist governments in a war against Fascist governments, will find these a handy record. The pamphlets are as follows:—

1. G. Dimitrov. "The Working Class in the Struggle Against Fascism." 2d.
  2. G. Dimitrov. "Reply to Discussion on Above." 1d.
  3. G. Dimitrov. "Concluding Address to Seventh Congress." 1d.
  4. W. Pieck. "Report of the E.C.C.I., with Reply to Discussion." 3d.
  5. Ercoli. "The Preparations for War." 2d.
  6. D. Manuisky. "The Victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R." 2d.
  7. D. Manuisky. "Report to the Active Members of the Moscow Organisation on Seventh Congress." 2d.
  8. D. Manuisky. "Engels in the Struggle for Revolutionary Marxism." 2d.
  9. O. Kuusinen. "The Youth." 2d.
  10. Wan Min. "The Colonial Peoples." 2d.
  11. "Resolutions and Decisions." 2d.
- (These, with the speech of H. Pollitt, published by the Communist Party, make up the complete Report of the Seventh Congress.) P. S.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable. Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.



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organ of the Labour Party, writes in an editorial (December 18th):—

No one in his senses regards the prospects of war with anything but loathing and horror.

The fact remains, and it has always been recognised, that there are risks and responsibilities, which each must shoulder, in the collective system.

The Communists ask for the closing of the Suez Canal, knowing that it may mean war with Italy.

The Parliamentary Labour Party moved its resolution condemning the Government's policy not on the ground of working class interests but that the policy was a betrayal of "the honour of Great Britain." This is only a short step from urging the workers that the "honour" of the country is something worth fighting for, a question which it is not impossible they may have to consider before the Abyssinian affair is closed.

In our November issue we put forward the view—confirmed by subsequent events and disclosures—that "Mussolini has had the temerity . . . to make

gestures remarkably like directing his air armadas, his Roman Legions, and his fleets of submarines towards various British strongholds in the Mediterranean. . . . The National Government, on reflection, appears to have concluded that some of the strongholds seem not so strong, and that discretion is well advised at present." In view of the terrific military, naval and air force preparations now being made at Alexandria and elsewhere by Britain it may well be that the British Government's readiness to recommend the Italian plunder of Abyssinia was partly in the nature of buying him off, partly to gain time to complete preparations in the Mediterranean. When the preparations are further advanced the British ruling class may adopt a more bellicose attitude. Then we would see that our own savages in high places would be as reckless with human life as ever the Fascist Government of Italy is, whether the lives of soldiers or of defenceless civilians. They would not be making war for "honour" or for the League but to protect capitalist interests, as in 1914.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington, Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from Dec. 11th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding, "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to J. Higgins, 18, Balgair Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month in McIntyre's Hall, 151, Lowwaters, at 7 p.m. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 142, Richmond Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Dick Jacobs, 12, Clifford Rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. N. Taylor, 5, Hawke Road, Upper Norwood, S.E.19.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Café, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Public invited. Sec., C. Drew, 84 Avon Road, Burnage, Manchester. Lectures every Sunday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street. Meeting on 7th October.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., H. Solley, 28, Gore Road, Victoria Park, E.9. Branch meets on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Cafe, 9, Manningtree Street (2nd Floor), Commercial Road, (near Gardiner's Corner). Lectures fortnightly at above address.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets 1st Sunday in the month, at 12 o'clock noon. All communications to H. E. Hutchins, Sec., 174, Haydens Road, S. Wimbledon, S.W.19.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.23. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[Monthly, Twopence

*A People is  
not yet ripe  
for Socialism  
so long as the  
majority of  
the masses  
are hostile to  
Socialism.*

KARL KAUTSKY.

## Progress of the Confidence Trick in Alberta

THE notion that the electors of Alberta placed the Social Credit Party in power, in the recent provincial elections, as a "protest" against old-line parties, is false. A brief review of the history of Alberta will show that at no time was adherence to either the Liberal or Conservative parties prevalent.

In 1905 Alberta was created a Province. Before then, as part of the North-West Territories, it was sparsely populated or settled; but under Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Government a huge emigration policy was embarked upon, with the assistance of the railroad and steamship companies. This policy caused an influx of thousands of immigrants in a comparatively short period of time from all

parts of the old world, as settlers on the land. A market for Eastern Canada implement manufacturers was thus created, and grain was produced in large quantities for export. These new settlers were of two types; one section coming from the crowded cities of Central Europe, the other comprising the peasantry who had managed to scrape up enough

passage money to transport them to the Golden West. Some of them brought over their radical leanings, such ideas being dominated by reform policies framed to suit the conditions in the countries from which they came. Localised settlements sprang up, and these groups of "nationals," retaining their own language, religion, mode of living and peculiar radical concepts, colonised the Alberta Province. In addition, in 1914, a situation arose in the Middle-West United States, where large numbers of farmers were faced with mortgage foreclosures. These farmers, constituting another brand of reformer, crossed the border with all their farm implements. Many of them were members of the Non-Partisan League, the tenets of which were based upon a scheme for bettering their conditions under capitalism. By virtue of their superior implement ownership, and their "safe and sane" league affiliations, they became dominant in the economic and political field in that Province. The stage was thus set for Alberta as the birth-place for many Utopian ideas, and it has produced more than one financial crank.

### The Farmers Seek a Saviour

A typical instance is the career of Rev. Irvine, of Wetaskiwin, member of the "Ginger Group," comprised of Progressives and I.L.P. -ers, under the leadership of J. S. Woodsworth, M.P., whose Alberta following was recently wiped out by the Social Credit Party. Mr. Irvine and his group advocated financial manipulation as early as 1922 in the Federal Parliament, and this vague policy was elaborated upon on many occasions, in truly Utopian fashion, by the former divine, to the extent that he became a financial oracle. This

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policy, as at present enunciated, is built around the idea of a central bank, and national control of credit. These opportunists came in with the temporary prosperity, along with the Progressive movement, which swept the prairie provinces. Distinctly "farmer" members were elected to the federal house. Calling themselves the United Farmers of Alberta, they obtained office in the local legislature on the basis of a four-dollar-a-bushel-wheat programme, advocated by Mr. Wisewood in 1922. Like so many Utopian promises, the price never materialised, and as the great debacle of 1929 approached, prices dropped sharply, and with them came more "radical" ideas which were embodied in subsequent movements. The chief of these was the Pool Elevator movement, a grain marketing co-operative venture, and it was believed at the time to be a solution to the farmer's troubles. Here came the opportunity for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.), movement, inaugurated in Calgary, 1932. The Alberta farmer was to be the backbone of the farm voting strength, which, in conjunction with the Independent Labour Party of Winnipeg and Vancouver, expected to bring together two divergent interests to an agreement on the issue of reforms. They formulated the type of platform that Socialists always expect from these conglomerations. In the provincial politics, however, the United Farmers continued to function as the alleviator of burdens imposed by the implement manufacturers, mortgage companies, etc., and as a champion of better prices for farm produce.

In spite of these efforts, the lot of the farmer was in no wise better than that of the adjoining provinces, who have mainly supported the old-line parties. It is true that Manitoba has been administered by another "farmer" government for the past eight years, but Premier Bracken recently supported the Federal Liberal Party in the 1935 elections, and a rapprochement between the two parties is imminent.

### The £5 a Month Party

The farmers' viewpoint has been stressed owing to the fact that they control the majority of seats in all elections, the industrial centres being few in number. These city dwellers have mainly supported the major political parties, with a sprinkling of support to the I.L.P. With the present distribution of parliamentary seats, however, these bodies do not affect the situation. The depression has thrown a large number of these workers into the Social Credit camp, and apparently the unemployed concur in the viewpoint that, having nothing to lose, they might as well support the "something for nothing" policy of Mr. Aberhart. Conducting an evangelical forum in the City of Calgary, with a radio hook-up reaching all parts of Alberta, a combination of the Gospel and Social Credit has been broadcast every Sunday

for many months by Mr. Aberhart. This medley became more effective propaganda than that of the U.F.A. party, whose programme was still mainly that of the C.C.F. The definite promise of a basic dividend of 25 dollars (about £5) per month fell on fertile soil. No details were submitted to the electorate, candidates were instructed to decline to answer questions or debate the policy (which few of them understood or had even studied); yet, to the amazement of the rest of Canada, including the Social Creditors themselves, they were swept into office with an overwhelming majority, August 22nd, 1935.

### Social Credit Deferred

This date marks the pinnacle of Social Credit, and, since that time, Mr. Aberhart has evaded the issue. His first statement, that it would be eighteen months before the initial dividend would be paid, was received with tolerance, but his subsequent offerings are not being so well treated. No preliminary arrangements have been made to usher in the new era, as Mr. Aberhart has found it a full-time job to administer capitalism. His first official act was a special trip to Ottawa, seeking the loan of 18,000,000 dollars to straighten up the financial situation left to him by his predecessors in office. He returned with enough (2½ millions) to meet maturing interest payments only. Since the change of government at Ottawa he is more ambitious and intends to request a loan of 200,000,000 dollars at a low rate of interest (3 per cent.), in order to refund the entire Provincial debt and those debts in the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, at present carrying high rates of interest (5 per cent.). He is quoted by the Canadian Press as follows: "Alberta will never have to go to the Dominion Government for another loan if Ottawa will supply the money requested . . . I am building on a solid foundation"—"and am involved in no race to apply Social Credit before any other country has it."

Mr. Aberhart suggested to school teachers that they acquire a knowledge of Social Credit and impart it to their students, using Social Credit textbooks in the schools. The Winnipeg Free Press comments editorially thus:—

Social Credit is definitely elected and given power to try out its doctrine. It does not need teaching in the Alberta schools. Let it get working in Alberta bringing in the modern Utopia and Mr. Aberhart won't need text books in the schools. There will be no need of special education to prove its worth then.

In the meantime—what? "Closing out the schools because of economic stress is a possibility by the end of the present year, unless drastic steps are taken," C. F. Casselman told a school board meeting recently at Edmonton. He further predicted the reduction of teachers' salaries as an economy measure. Again, a delegation of Civil Servants, who took the pre-election utterances seriously, waited on the new Premier, requesting an

increase in pensions on retirement. This was flatly refused on account of the financial state of the Province.

In order to augment the Provincial Treasury it is proposed that the beer parlours, now operated by the brewers under license, shall be taken over by and administered by the Province, as this move would bring in 100,000 dollars to the treasury. A tax on wages, similar to that in operation in Manitoba, is further mooted. The telephone charges have been increased by 35 per cent., and there is a tax proposed on every bushel of wheat, every sack of flour, and every loaf of bread. Premier Aberhart explains his actions thus: "Actual inauguration of Social Credit plans were being delayed by efforts to straighten the financial affairs of the Province." Thus we see our champion of Social Credit badly embarrassed through lack of sound money; a truly Gilbertian situation. What of his devotees, say you?

### Farmers Demanding their £5 a Month

Farmers in foreign settlements are beginning to get restless. They expect daily to receive their basic dividend, and local postmasters report having a difficult task attempting to persuade these people that they are not withholding the cheques for the 25 dollars. Meetings are being held in schools of the various districts and letters being forwarded to the Premier asking the reason for the delay. In the cities, the electorate are speculating on how long Mr. Aberhart can keep up the bluff, and are looking to a first-class political collapse when the farmers realise the truth. In spite of recent reports as to a split, it appears that Mr. Aberhart intends to rely to a large extent on the services of Major Douglas, who was retained by the former United Farmers of Alberta government; and, in addition, the advice of Mr. R. J. Magor, an Eastern Canada

financial expert, will be sought at the usual comfortable rate of remuneration.

As far as one can ascertain at the present time, the preliminary plan is to set aside 10,000,000 dollars. A credit to this amount is to be written up in the provincial books. The province will thereafter issue a cheque for 25 dollars to every man and woman in Alberta, with a lesser sum for each child. These cheques must be spent in a given time, and turned over by the merchant to the provincial treasury. The cheques will be re-issued to the populace again and the process repeated *ad infinitum*. To offset inflation, it is proposed to rigidly enforce a "just price" on the merchants, and those selling under or over the set price will not be allowed to operate. To regulate the imports and exports, real money is to be used, and is expected to work smoothly alongside the basic dividend. Despite many requests to Mr. Aberhart to elaborate his plan, he still remains evasive, and faith seems to be the foundation of all his efforts. During the course of his remarks to a meeting of Salvationists, he said: "Some people come to me and say, 'Do you think you can do it?' and I answer, 'ME? No! not me—GOD.'" Such childlike faith in the efficacy of the New Trinity of Aberhart, Douglas and the Deity, shows the metaphysical state of mind of the Premier. In the meantime, the requirements of capitalistic production have to be met, and the Social Credit Party begins to realise that it is attempting to control a system which is uncontrollable. It will be interesting to watch further developments, as Social Credit will be made or unmade by the happenings in Alberta during the next few months.

"QUO VADIS"  
(Socialist Party of Canada,  
194, Market Avenue E.,  
Winnipeg.)

## Has Fascism Proved Marx Wrong?

A by-product of the rise of Fascism in Italy and Germany has been a renewed onslaught on Marx and the theories for which he stood. The *Morning Post*, whose zeal often outruns its capacity for clear-thinking, gleefully pointed to Hitler's success in rallying the peasants, small traders, manufacturers and black-coated workers as evidence that Marx was wrong in forecasting the crushing of the little capitalists by the big ones, and the thrusting of the former into the ranks of the working class. The *Morning Post's* error is that it has a mistaken notion of what is meant by working class. It forgets that the clerical workers and so-called brain workers are just as much members of the working class as any other wage-earning or salaried sellers of labour-power. Secondly, the *Morning Post* for-

gets that the extreme discontent and unsettlement of the groups referred to above are factors which themselves must be explained, and there is no explanation except the one Marx gave. Why was Hitler able to get these masses of people to line up in his organisation? The principal reason was, as Marx foretold, that capitalism was grinding them to dust, and in their despair they rallied round the man who promised to stop the ruthless onward march of large-scale capitalism.

This brings us to the further and more important question: Why were the workers and the Social Democratic Movement not able to prevent this reactionary outbreak? Here we can leave the *Morning Post* and consider the case put by Mr. Leopold Schwarzschild, a refugee from Germany



who contributes to the *People* (Bombay, August 18th) a provoking article called "Historical Mysticism."

### Who Were the Mystics?

We cannot do better than quote Schwarzschild's own words regarding the failure of opponents of Fascism.

During the past five years both in Germany and abroad one question has loomed larger and larger in the minds of thousands of educated and thoughtful people. Confronted with the events of these years they ask themselves with growing anxiety "What do the historical materialists have to say?"

If the doctrine of historical materialism can be expressed in simple form, it means that definite economic developments must give rise to definite and parallel political developments, but recent history seems to contradict this principle flagrantly. Three-quarters of all our educated people believed in historical materialism before the War, and it was not until after 1918 that they gradually began to have doubts. Since the beginning of the economic crisis, however, almost everything has seemed to run counter to this theory.

Doesn't the growth and victory of Hitlerism fundamentally contradict the historical-materialist doctrine that during the declining period of capitalism the class consciousness of the proletariat increases? . . . How do the advocates of integral historical materialism, now known as Marxism, still justify their beliefs? How do their professional interpreters and orthodox advocates hold their ground?

Having put his questions Schwarzschild seeks an answer in a book on Fascism by Fritz Sternberg. Although Sternberg tries to defend Marx against such criticism Schwarzschild has little difficulty in disposing of Sternberg's main arguments. What then is the answer? It turns entirely on the question of the rapidity with which the Socialist Movement can grow among the workers, and immediately it shows that the position of the S.P.G.B. has been correct. Let us consider on the one side the various Labour Movements, and on the other side the S.P.G.B. They (and this includes the Communists) believed in "leadership." They proclaimed their intention of building up great mass organisations on programmes of social reform and then leading these masses on to the fight for Socialism. They dubbed their organisations "Socialist" and "Marxist" on the strength of the knowledge and intentions of a handful of leaders. They promised rapid growth and early victory, and to the superficial view their claim was justified by their membership figures and electoral successes.

Against these movements stood the S.P.G.B. in isolation. We repudiated the whole leadership theory. We denied that a movement built up on a reformist programme can be Socialist or fight for Socialism. We contended that the huge membership and appearance of strength of such movements as the German Social Democratic Party, English Labour Party, and later, the Communist Parties, were illusory. We pointed out 31 years ago that these movements were not really Socialist. Their

Marxism was only skin deep. They were of no use to the working class, and the first crisis would shatter them or find them openly supporting capitalism and capitalist war. They were at heart nationalist in spite of their international associations.

### The Error of the Labour Parties

The S.P.G.B. has been shown to be right. These movements failed in 1914 and failed again in face of the Fascist movements, but that is not the failure of Marxism but of Labourism. Nevertheless, there is something still which needs explaining. If a genuine Socialist movement has made so little headway, what is the reason? Does not the rise of the Labour Parties itself prove Marx wrong since these movements have succeeded where Socialist movements have remained comparatively unsuccessful? The answer again is, "No!" The S.P.G.B. insisted from the first that the only possible basis for a Socialist Movement is convinced Socialists, organised in complete independence and on a Socialist declaration of principles. We also realised what went with that. We realised that the working class were saturated with capitalist ideas and theories, capitalist nationalism, religion, economics, philosophy, and capitalist notions of the superiority of the ruling class and political leaders. For these reasons and also because the Labour Parties were fostering many of these illusions themselves, the work of making Socialists and building up a Socialist Party was bound to be arduous and slow. In the meantime the great mass of the workers, in spite of some advance they have made, have remained essentially capitalist in outlook, ready tools for capitalist purposes. If millions of workers have stampeded from one vain hope—the Labour Parties—to another vain hope—Hitler—that is added proof that the Marxian S.P.G.B. was right and the Labour Parties were wrong.

Mr. Schwarzschild was also taken in by those imitations of Socialist Movements. His view that "three-quarters of all our educated people believed in historical materialism before the war," and that the Labour Movements were Socialist and Marxist had no real foundation. It is that mistake on his part which leads him to put his question and fail to find the answer.

P. S.

## Do you Know the Eight Principles of Socialism? . .

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## A Chapter on Dialectical Materialism

"The Scientific Method of Thinking," by Edward Conzé, Ph.D. 5/- Chapman & Hall, Ltd., publishers.

WHAT was that I just heard you mention? interrupted a fellow at a public meeting. "Dialectical Materialism," impressively replied the speaker. "Then I'll have a shilling each way on that for the Derby," said the questioner. I confess to having a certain sympathy with the fellow who mistook a principle of philosophical thought for a racehorse. The phrases connected with science or philosophy are generally so unfamiliar to those to whom the Socialist message is directed, that little excuse may be allowed for their use without due qualification as to their meaning. Those who labour to produce little for themselves and very much for other people are somewhat prone to take unkindly to abstract terms of any kind outside their everyday workaday. The average worker's lack of education and training in science and philosophy, together with the anxiety attendant upon the ever-pressing need of obtaining their means of subsistence often militates against their readily grasping complex names and theories.

We feel certain that many are those who, after having listened to a discourse on any aspect of social science, have retired like Omar of old—by quitting the same door as in they went. We mention this, whilst being fully alive to the fact that unusual phrases cannot always be avoided.

But the real educationists, those who wish to instruct, as distinct from the type who would have us "see what clever fellows we are," seldom fail to endeavour to clarify their terms of reference.

In the work under review, the author has tried to meet the requirements of simple and concise statement, though one cannot readily say that he has been altogether successful.

He is most probably aware of this himself, since he says that whilst endeavouring to avoid the clumsy phrase "dialectical materialism" in outlining its meaning, "it would have been a miracle if I had not sometimes been too simple and sometimes too involved." Anyhow, to have attempted a clear and precise presentation of a complex theory is admirable, and one may excuse Dr. Conzé for any shortcomings in this direction—a materialist could hardly lay claim to the performance of miracles. The need of the working class to grapple with and master the essentials of any line of thought connected with either their subjugation or their emancipation is an imperative one, and should, therefore, be undertaken at all costs.

What, then, is this "dialectical materialism" about which we have heard so much in certain

quarters, and about which Dr. Conzé sets out to tell the story. He mentions that in order to comprehensively grasp its meaning "some background of knowledge of other philosophies is necessary." This impels us to add that if all its ramifications are to be considered in the light of and distinct from other and older philosophies a much larger volume than the one we are reviewing will have to be composed.

It is with the name of Karl Marx that the theory of dialectical materialism is directly associated since it was he who, after taking up the materialist thought of his time, gave it that particular turn and direction which distinguishes Marx's materialism from others, particularly that line of thought described by Engels as "metaphysical materialism." Up to and including the time of Marx, materialism had claimed its champions from the times of ancient Greece and, despite the varied forms it assumed with different exponents, materialism generally stood for an attitude of mind opposed to the traditional supernaturalism of the ages. Not that this must be understood to imply that all materialist thought prior to Marx was free from the "God idea" in one form or another. A thin sort of theism had dominated the minds of even such profound thinkers as Bacon and Locke—a feature which caused Marx to satirically declare, "Theism is but an easy-going way of getting rid of religion." Nevertheless the predominant characteristic of materialist thought was the insistence upon the method of observation and experimentation of known or presumably knowable natural forces. The data for study here, whether in astronomy, geology, biology or the various aspects of human existence, rested upon the actual material at hand and what was known and verifiable rather than by the method of approach through preconceived prepossessions concerning "supernatural causes," or what is known in philosophy as the *a priori* method of thinking.

From the time that man emerged from his ape-like condition of primitive times he has always had to live by and through some working and workable arrangements with the conditions of his environment. That arrangement has been made by man himself, first out of the material of mother earth and next by the uses of such material which he has had to discover by his own unaided efforts. Mankind may have had distorted conceptions; in fact, they have had them galore, about the whys and wherefores of existence, but in the mere fact of living and causing his species to persist, the severely practical side of all human life has ultimately shaped man's philosophies rather than vice versa.

That "in the beginning was action" is a



sound principle or guide in philosophic thought, and one thoroughly well but broadly stated by Engels—"before there was argumentation there was action" . . . "and human action had solved the difficulty long before human ingenuity invented it." "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." It is on this note that the materialism of Marx is seen to be in striking contrast with that of his predecessors or his contemporaries. Although in the ultimate sense the Socialist view of life may and does turn to a definite scientific attitude to all phenomena, whether animate or inanimate, the Marxian is primarily concerned with the activities of human society. Its rise and growth, its own laws of development, and what are its component parts form the essentials of Marxian theories. Where previous materialist thought had ignored or failed to tackle the problem of the underlying causes of social development Marx, who had studied and learned much of the world's leading philosophical and scientific thought, applied a method of interpreting history which has borne illuminating results. The name by which Marx's (and also Engels's) theory of historical development has been generally known is "the materialist conception of history," or "historical materialism." We have endeavoured to outline the essentials of this theory in the SOCIALIST STANDARD in the past, so will let it suffice at present to refer those further interested thereto, or better still, to the works of Marx and Engels themselves.

Where, then, does the phrase "dialectical" come from? And what does it mean in any case? To get to reasonably close grips with the question it is necessary, we think, to look back at the leading philosophy of Germany at the time that both Marx and Engels first saw the light of day. Dr. Conzé reminds us that in the work of Hegel, the most noted of German philosophical thinkers, we are presented with "a most wonderful and precious instrument," the "dialectical method." Dr. Conzé is, of course, entitled, if he so wishes, to describe it as "wonderful and precious," but for many reasons we would prefer to acclaim it more modestly as very useful.

"Dialectics," says Dr. Conzé, "is that way of thinking which works with the assumption of a unity of opposites and of the reality of contradictions." We do not feel seriously disposed to quarrel with this definition, but we certainly think that dialectics embraces something more than the bare definition given by our author.

The entire Hegelian philosophy rested upon an evolutionary conception of the universe. To Hegel all things are of a transitory nature, they are in a process of constantly coming into being and passing away to other and higher forms which, in turn, are subject to the same process or processes. This was identical with the leading thought of ancient Greece, but with, of course, the accumulated knowledge of the intervening centuries.

Heraclitus like many others of his times, had formulated the same law of existence that "Everything is and is not, for everything is fluid, is constantly coming into being and passing away."

But in the domain of human society the principle by which social institutions have their being and pass away was a problem not satisfactorily met by Hegel.

Though he emphasised the law of motion in nature and human history to proceed through contradictions inherent in the nature of all phenomena, his philosophy had to conclude and subside within its own contradiction, which reminds us of the comment written by Engels when dealing with Hegel: "As regards all philosophies, their system is doomed to perish, and for this reason, because it emanates from an imperishable desire of the human soul, the desire to abolish all contradictions. But if all contradictions are once and for all disposed of, we have arrived at the so-called absolute truth, history is at an end, and yet it will continue to go on, although there is nothing further left for it to do—thus a newer and more insoluble contradiction" (Feurbach, page 48).

Nevertheless, the dialectical method of Hegel had, if not settled a problem, at least propounded one, and Marx took up the dialectic where Hegel left it, and transformed it anew as a weapon of understanding of what the contradictions in human society consist, and what are the actual factors upon which the process of social development proceeds.

From a method of interpreting the whole panorama of life as though it were governed by the working out of an "idea" immanent in nature and history—as Hegel had conceived—Marx turned the method into one of viewing the make-up of human history in the light of the reciprocal actions of man and his environment at different stages of history. In this we see that humanity does not effect its history out of "ideas" operating of their own volition as though a "mental world" were an independent entity.

(To be continued.)

ROBERTUS.

#### This Month's Quotation.

This month's quotation is from "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (National Labour Press, Ltd., p. 24).

#### NOTTINGHAM

A Lecture will be given under the auspices of the Cosmo Debating Society at Nottingham University Forum, at 2.30 p.m., Shakespeare Street, on Sunday, March 22nd.

Subject - "The Materialism of Karl Marx"  
R. ROBERTUS.

Questions and Discussion.

## MEETINGS, LECTURES, &c.

### HEAD OFFICE

Lectures are given each Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

Feb. 2nd "Which Road to Working Class Unity?" S. CASH  
.. 9th "Historical Materialism and Atheist Idealism" A. KOHN  
.. 16th "Anarchism and Marxism" A. LANCASTER  
.. 23rd "The Epic of Stakhanovism" M. CAMERON  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### HACKNEY

Public Meetings. The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, E.9 (Back of Pavilion Cinema, Mare Street).  
Every Friday at 8.30 p.m.

Feb. 7th "Marxist Economics" E. HATWELL  
.. 14th "Modern Religion" E. REGINALD  
.. 21st "The Rise of Capitalism" E. HATWELL  
.. 28th "The Communist Right about Turn" V. BERRY  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

### STEPNEY

A Meeting will be held at 9, Manningtree Street (Café), 2nd floor, at 8.30 p.m. on Friday, 28th February.

Subject:

"The Materialist Conception of History and Art"  
A. LANCASTER

Admission free. Questions and Discussion. All invited.

### MANCHESTER

Public Meetings, Sundays at 7.30. CRAIGWEIL CAFE, PETER STREET (opp. Theatre Royal).

Feb. 2nd "The Road to Socialism" A. WHITE  
.. 9th "Evolution and Revolution" R. REGINALD  
.. 16th "The Chief Delusions of Our Times" GILMAC  
.. 23rd "Socialism and Religion" R. ROBERTUS  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturdays in each month.

Feb. 15th. 3 p.m. British Museum  
"HISTORY OF POTTERY" K. DEVEREUX  
March 7th. 3 p.m. British Museum  
"ANCIENT CIVILISATION" GILMAC

A fairly large number of members and friends availed themselves of the opportunity on January 4th to benefit from Comrade Lester's knowledge of the customs of the barbarians. At the Science Museum on the 18th January, under the guidance of Comrade Cameron, members found that isolated chemical facts became more comprehensible when the social force behind them, instead of merely the individual genius, was taken into consideration.

Comrades are finding these visits an admirable method of introducing friends to the Party.

### IMPORTANT

A meeting of Party members will be held at Head Office on Saturday, 15th February, at 7.30 p.m. sharp.

The business to be discussed is, improved methods of pushing sales of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD and other Party literature. The chair will be taken by Com. Kohn promptly at 7.30 p.m. All members are urged to attend.

CENTRAL ORGANIZER.

## EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

### ADMISSION FREE

#### At HEAD OFFICE

Sundays 4.0 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Feb. 2 "Relation between Value and Price" DISCUSSION  
.. 9 "History of Russia" M. CAMERON  
.. 16 "Monopolies" SANDY  
.. 23 "Constitutional Crisis in U.S.A." A. LANCASTER  
Mar. 1 "Banking and Credit" F. EVANS

#### At BATTERSEA BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8.0 p.m., at Latchmere Road Baths, Small Waiting Room (Burns Road).

Feb. 13 "Science and the Materialist Conception of History" M. CAMERON  
.. 27 "History of Trade Unions" E. LAKE

#### At CHISWICK BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays at 8 p.m., at 376, High Road, Chiswick (opposite Turnham Green).

Feb. 13 "History of Trade Unions" E. HARDY  
.. 27 "History of Parliament" F. EVANS

#### At STEPNEY BRANCH

Alternate Fridays, 8 p.m., at Café, 9 Manningtree Street, (2nd Floor) Commercial Road, (near Gardiner's Corner).

Feb. 14 "Science and the Materialist Conception of History" M. CAMERON

#### At SOUTHEND BRANCH

One Wednesday each month, at 8 p.m.

Feb. 19 "Modern Religion" V. BERRY

#### At DAGENHAM and ROMFORD BRANCH

Fridays at 8 p.m., at Ralph's Café, 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath.

Feb. 7 "Banking" F. EVANS  
.. 14 "Theories of Value before Marx" ISBITSKY  
.. 21 "Theory of Value" CALLIS  
.. 28 "Division of Surplus Value" GOLDBERG

#### At LEWISHAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road.

Feb. 13 "Theory of Value" CALLIS  
.. 27 "Division of Surplus Value" E. WILMOTT

#### At WEST HAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate.

Feb. 6 "Modern Religion" V. BERRY  
.. 20 "Science and the Materialist Conception of History" E. WILMOTT

#### Tooting Branch

Tooting Branch has been merged with Battersea. Members and sympathisers who formerly attended meetings at Tooting are invited to attend Battersea Branch on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. at the Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths (entrance in Burns Road).

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Answers to Correspondents.

Several letters about Trade Unionism and Russia were received too late for reply in this issue.  
ED. COMM.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
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## Quins, Quads and Poverty

IT has been stated that the interest taken in the Quins and Quads by "poor working-class mothers is astonishing." The interest certainly does not stop there. Dr. Josiah Oldfield, speaking at the London School of Dietetics, on January 14th, attributed "the present outburst of multiple births" to birth control. It is, he says, "a throw-back towards the primitive. All primitive creatures were full of fecundity so that by good chance some of their early offspring would survive the perils and mortalities of early life." What support there may be for his view does not, however, concern us here. What is of greater interest is that this led other commentators to link up the population question with working-class poverty in a novel way.

We have long been familiar with the argument that poverty is due to over-population, and that if the workers would only decrease the size of their families they would all be better off. Now we are introduced to the opposite argument, from a Catholic, Father Woodlock. In a statement to the *Evening Standard* (January 15th) he pointed out that a falling population means fewer soldiers to defend the Empire, and that in addition it means greater poverty for the workers.

Only short-sighted economists fail to notice that a fall in the birth-rate will not help the condition of the working classes, but accompanied by the noticeable increased longevity of our people, will put a much heavier burden on the workers.

They will be fewer, but in the future they will have to support a much increased number of aged and unemployable dependants. Propagandists of the spread of the birth-control movement never seem to aver this.

We can agree with Father Woodlock that those who preach birth control as a cure for poverty and unemployment are completely in the wrong, but in rejecting that fallacy Father Woodlock embraces another. It is true that a population containing a large proportion of people unable to work may be at a disadvantage compared with one containing a higher proportion of able-bodied men and women in the prime of life, but we are not living in a system of society in which the problem of wealth production is as simple as that. Under capitalism large numbers of people—the propertied class—are not engaged in wealth production and have no desire or necessity to be so engaged. Consequently the burden resting on the shoulders of the workers is not that of keeping only themselves and their own dependants, but, in addition, of keeping the propertied class in luxury and idleness or non-productive activity, and of keeping all the military and civil hangers-on of the capitalist system. The wealth producers are not engaged in producing for themselves, but of producing wealth for the capitalist class alone to own and control. What the workers get is wages, based on their cost of living. If the cost of maintaining a working-class household is reduced by smaller families or increased by larger ones, wages will sooner or later adjust themselves, leaving the workers no better and no worse off than before. As for unemployment, it is the over-production of commodities in relation to the demand of the market, and the encroachment of the machine, which the worker has to consider, not the size of the population. Experience has shown that these forces work just as powerfully in the countries with a stable or declining population as in those which are expanding.

Father Woodlock and those he criticises are alike in error through ignoring the economic laws or even the very existence of capitalism.

Before things could work out in the way Father Woodlock assumes, we have got to get rid of capitalism, lock, stock, and barrel. When that is done, and not before, we shall be able to consider the problem raised by him.

Incidentally, when we have cleared the ground by removing capitalism, we shall not have to consider the problem of population from the standpoint of the necessity of producing more cannon-fodder.

## Bolshevism and the Third International

By no means unanimous will be the interpretations placed on the programmes formed at the recent

seventh World Congress of the Communist International. The official

Communist Parties, of course, hail these programmes as the highest expression of revolutionary political wisdom, calculated to promote the best interests of the world proletariat, at the same time aiding the "Socialist Fatherland" in its unparalleled task of building up Socialism within its borders. The Communist opposition parties, with Trotsky as their moving spirit, see in these programmes full justification for their claim that as a force making for world revolution the Communist International is utterly dead. Groups like the Proletarian Party of America will no doubt continue in their role of reluctant apologists for the rank opportunism of the Communist International. Socialists, however, will content themselves with pointing out the non-Socialist character of these programmes. To Socialists it would indeed be strange if the Third International, whose fountain head is in Moscow, would devote its energies in the struggle to achieve Socialism. Russia is now busily engaged in administering capitalism, to which end it naturally uses its influence over the Third International. This fact is no secret to the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its companion parties in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. For years the Socialist Party of Great Britain, in the face of bitter attacks from those

who read Socialism into the Russian conditions, have consistently and uncompromisingly exposed the capitalist nature of Bolshevist economy.

Socialism means the common ownership of the instruments of production by the whole of society. It is inconceivable without the fullest democracy. Bolshevism means the State ownership of the instruments of production administered by a dictatorial minority. Lenin regarded as chimerical the notion that the working class could democratically effect a Socialist revolution.

From the very first he held the view that the working class was so politically immature that it had to be led by a small, resolute group of professional revolutionists. This party of professional revolutionists was in no way to be democratically responsible to the working class, but was to demand the utmost obedience from this class. As Rosenberg points out in his "History of Bolshevism," the split in the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1903 was caused by Lenin's insistence that the Party must be exclusive and guide with an iron discipline the infantile working class. Contrary to the belief of so many Communists, the Soviets played no part in Lenin's theories for many years. It was not until the March Revolution in 1917, when the Soviets arose

spontaneously, that he accepted them as an accomplished fact and proceeded to make use of them. Even as he worked with them he had every reason to believe that his party could gain control over

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



them, which is precisely what happened.

The creation of the Red Army marked the end of the Soviets as democratic organs of administration. The Soviets were then reduced to the position of a shadow government, a position that they occupy to this day. A dictatorship of the Communist Party arose, governing Russia from one end of the land to the other. Centralised governmental organisations took over the function of managing production. One branch of State machinery after another was created, until a bureaucratic State apparatus arose more powerful than the Tsar's. The passage in Lenin's "State and Revolution" which demands that every workers' revolution must begin by smashing the bureaucratic State machine was conveniently forgotten. A huge bureaucracy developed. The leading positions became increasingly filled by men adept at the game of what in America is called "boss-politics." Freedom of expression within the party becomes ever more curtailed. So far did these developments proceed in Russia that already in 1921 an Opposition raised its head, sounding the warning that one form of tyranny was being supplanted by another.

In an industrially backward country like Russia, Socialism was unthinkable. When the Bolsheviks make so much to-do about building up Socialism they are simply cloaking material conditions with fine-sounding phraseology. State capitalism formed an integral part of Lenin's theoretical system. It was not Socialism he contemplated for Russia, nor for that matter for Europe when he thought he saw a revolution impending there. What he called Socialism was nothing more or less than nationalisation. He could only envisage what we call Socialism as a later development still. Rosenberg quotes Lenin's definition of Socialism: "Socialism is nothing else than the next step from the stage of monopoly State Capitalism. Or—alternatively: Socialism is nothing else than a capitalistic State monopoly worked in the interests of the whole nation and therefore no longer a capitalist monopoly." ("History of Bolshevism," p. 103.) This is not Socialism; it is purely nationalisation. It is capitalism. It is what exists in Russia to-day. There the fundamental relations of capitalism exist. The workers in Russia, like those of any other capitalist country, are divorced from the means of production. To live, they must sell their labour power for a wage, which on the average is merely sufficient for their maintenance. Production of commodities for exchange on the market, money, with its multiple functions in a commodity-producing society, interest payments on bond flotations, income tax laws—most of the usual social processes of a capitalist economy are in operation in Russia.

Neither are class distinctions wanting. On this point we may quote Rosenberg:

Official Soviet statistics published in 1930 show that deposits amounting to 722 millions of roubles

were credited in the books of the Russian Savings Bank. Of this only 91 millions belongs to workmen, 205 millions to employees and Government officials, 134 millions to "special" workers, i.e., members of professions, manual workers, etc., and only 46 millions to peasants as individuals. To these figures must be added 246 millions belonging to "legal" persons, behind which designation were concealed chiefly Collectives and other co-operative societies. This statistical panorama serves admirably to reveal the multiplicity of classes in modern Russia no less than the fact that in standard of living and opportunity for saving, the workers are by no means favoured above the rest. (p. 237.)

As industrialisation proceeds and the social wealth increases, these class divisions will become sharper. Capitalism may differ in form as between different countries, but its basic relations and consequences are the same everywhere. By erecting a strong central government, keeping Russia unified, and establishing an embracive State capitalism which hastens industrial development, the Bolsheviks may have helped on social development in Russia. But this is quite another thing from saying that Russia is building up Socialism.

The American millionaire, Hearst, and others of his class who see their privileged position menaced by the Communist International, ought to be reassured upon reading the reports coming from the Seventh Congress in Moscow. For America, the Congress has in view such startlingly revolutionary measures as the creation of a Farmer-Labor Party, which is to "... win a majority of elective posts in the local, state and Federal Governments, levy a special tax on capital to obtain funds for social insurance and relief, cancel the Supreme Court's right to make laws, and democratise the Senate." Apparently some delegates to the Congress have the sagacity to see in these measures little difference from the reforms advocated by the Democratic Party. In a speech at the Congress on August 15th, Dmitroff called upon the American Communists to support Roosevelt in order to "prevent reactionary, anti-new deal finance capital from setting up a Fascist Government." (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, August 17th, 1935.)

The Communist International has always been used to serve the needs of Russia's domestic policy. The sudden somersaults that mark the history of the Communist International reflect changes that occurred in the economic policies inside Russia. From 1918 to 1921, when Lenin felt that the Russian Revolution would fail unless the revolution occurred in Europe, the tactics of the Communist International were shaped accordingly. The European Communist parties were ordered to preserve their independence and to expel all irresolute members. Proclamations were couched in flaming revolutionary language. By 1921 War Communism, so-called, brought things to such a pass that Lenin was forced to retreat by way of the New Economic Policy. Moreover, it became clear that the European Revo-

lution was not imminent after all. With compromise at home went compromise abroad. The Third International ordered a United Front with the Social Democratic Parties of Western Europe. Finally, in 1928, when Stalin entered upon his course of so-called "building up Socialism in one country," all attempts seriously to influence the European Labour Movement were abandoned.

The Communist International to-day serves chiefly to keep alive the fiction that the Soviet Union is ruled by the working class, who are engaged in building up Socialism. It is largely by means of this fiction that the ruling power in Russia secures the support of the working masses. These masses are told that they are building up Socialism and that on some fine day not too far in the future theirs will be a paradise on earth. This fable must be maintained if the Government's standing with the workers is not to be damaged.

The Third International aids in perpetuating this fable by propagating it among sections of workers in other countries. Because they believe Russia is leading the way to Socialism for the international working class, these sections lend their sympathy and support to the Soviet Union. In France the workers are even told that in the event of a war with Fascist Germany the French workers should fight in the trenches and abstain from subversive propaganda behind the lines.

Socialists refuse to be carried away by the Bolshevik myth. They will continue to point out the capitalist nature of Russian conditions. They will explain to the workers everywhere that they have nothing but death and untold suffering to gain by engaging in the next capitalist shambles—even if one of the belligerents happens to be Russia.

F. M.,

Workers' Socialist Party, U.S.A.

## Notes by the Way

### Little Minds which Think Alike

On December 1st, Dr. Schacht, the Nazi Government's "economic dictator," made a vigorous defence of capitalism on the ground that without highly-developed capitalist industry Germany could not build and maintain a modern system of armaments and armed forces (*Times*, December 2nd).

"No handicraft or peasant romanticism of the past," he said, "could be a substitute for the industrial workers' aptitude for tending machines."

In another speech (*Manchester Guardian*, December 6th) he demanded the encouragement of that typically capitalist instrument the joint-stock company, and claimed that a wealthy class is necessary in order to produce "beauty and art in the world."

This is all old stuff, but it had a purpose. It was designed to choke off the Nazis who still take seriously their leader's former propaganda in favour of handicrafts, small-scale production, etc.

As Hitler has been one of those who have used propaganda about handicrafts and little shopkeepers as a method of getting power, he must now find something else to dangle before the German workers' eyes. So on December 9th we find him telling a meeting of railwaymen that they already have Socialism on the railways, which are State-owned, but operated by a public utility company:—

The German railways, Herr Hitler pointed out, were a Socialist system and could stand comparison with any privately-owned system in the world. Sense of duty and joy in service had been responsible for the building up of the railway system. As National Socialists they fought for a State which would be built up on the basis that the community came before the individual. In the State as such, the State administration, the corps of officials, the Army, and in

the railway system they found evidence that their attitude was realisable. (*Times*, December 10th.)

This is, of course, a libel on Socialism; absurd, but no more absurd than the Labour Party propaganda for the "Socialist" Post Office, the "Socialist" Transport Board, and the "Socialist" State-ownership of mining royalties now being carried through by the Baldwin Government.

Compare Hitler's speech with the two following statements by Mr. Herbert Morrison.

Mr. Herbert Morrison, the former Minister of Transport, speaking at a meeting at Transport House, Westminster, last night, said that the London Traffic Combine were a very fine organisation; they did not run the group selfishly for private profit as they might do. The L.G.O.C., for example, covered a number of routes which were not profitable. There was no doubt that the combine had a considerable degree of public spirit in running their undertakings. Had they been more greedy his life in fighting them over his Bill for placing London traffic in the hands of a corporation would have been considerably easier. (*Times*, April 18th, 1932.)

The other demonstration of Ministerial humbug and deception, directed against their own followers rather than against the Labour Party, was the policy of the Government on coalmining royalties. They went right through the election declaring for something called unification of royalties. Labour men asked them at the time what they meant, but they would not say. Now that the election was safely over the Attorney-General had informed them that unification meant nationalisation.

"We are, of course, delighted at what is in principle a Socialist triumph," said Mr. Morrison, "but we can have nothing but contempt for a Government that wins an election on an anti-Socialist programme and then promptly rams a chunk of Socialism down the throats of its own supporters." (Mr. Morrison, in a speech at South Hackney. *Manchester Guardian*, December 16th, 1935.)

The truth is that neither handicrafts nor capitalist mass production, neither a lot of little capitalists, nor a few big ones, neither private capitalism, nor State capitalism, neither trusts and



combines, nor public utility companies will solve the workers' problems. Only Socialism will do so.

### The "Times" and Frederick Engels.

In an unsigned review of Mayer's Biography of Engels, the *Times* publishes surprisingly appreciative references to Engels:—

We see him faithfully depicted in this narrative as a consistent character throughout his long life—a highly gifted and vigorous man who enjoyed life thoroughly—a powerful intellect, always eager for knowledge and keenly observant of the large movements going on about him, only too hopeful of the causes he had at heart, forming his own opinions and pertinaciously adhering to them—a born writer and the master of a straightforward forcible style, a capable linguist—simple and direct in all he did and wrote and thought—and withal an extra-ordinarily modest mind, which made little of his own labours and sacrifices for the common cause, unlike nearly all the others who supported it in their own way. It is this essential modesty which explains his apparent subservience to Marx. He made mistakes, as who has not? But enough remains of his known writings, including his recently published private correspondence, to justify the conclusion that in regard to international politics, military strategy, and commercial policy he was "one of the most original thinkers of the latter half of the nineteenth century."—(*Times*, January 7th.)

### A Cry of Anguish from Alberta.

Mr. Aberhart, pupil of Major Douglas, won the election last year by promising £5 a month to everybody. He knew it could be done, and without costing anything to anybody, because Major Douglas had told him so. Now, after being in office for several months, he has put back the glad day of the share-out for two years, and he is urging Major Douglas to run over there to get the machine going. The master, however, appears to be showing a remarkable disinclination to go to the aid of his pupil, and this has drawn an anguished cry from the latter. The *Daily Express* Calgary correspondent reports as follows:—

To-day the Premier is carrying on a long-range dispute with Major Douglas in London. He admits it would be impossible for Major Douglas to draft any social credit legislation for the House at this late date, but threatens that he will not wait long for the father of social credit.—(*Daily Express*, January 13th, 1936.)

A further statement by Mr. Aberhart, reported in the same issue of the *Daily Express*, shows that he is getting distinctly worried about the soundness of the whole proposition:—

I am determined that Major Douglas must come here after the session is over. If he does not I will undertake the job myself, but he is the man to do it. He started this social credit thing: I have taken my ideas from him.—(*Italics ours*.)

### Yes, The Maggot Would Starve.

The Alberta situation prompts us to remind Douglasites of a stock question which has featured for years in their propaganda. The question is: "Would a maggot starve because the apple is too big?"

The answer is "yes," if the apple belonged to the capitalist class and was being forcibly protected and controlled by a Douglasite Government, which said that the maggot must not eat for two years, so that interest to capitalist bondholders could be paid immediately.

### A Warning about Shorter Hours.

Enthusiasts for shorter hours and the five-day week should take note of the way in which the capitalists can always adapt their industries to the changed conditions. One serious development is the increasing introduction of the two-shift system. To facilitate this, legislation is being passed regularising the employment of women and young persons on the two-shift system, spreading from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. In other words, much of the advantage of shorter hours and daytime work, gained in the past, is going to be lost. Even if hours of work are further shortened, it is a definite worsening of working class conditions to have larger and larger numbers of workers employed on the early start or late finish, many of them suffering the disadvantage of irregular hours as well.

In addition, there is, of course, the usual intensification of work. A Report published by the United States Department of Labour, called "The Health and Safety of Women in Industry" (Washington, 1935), contains the following warning note:—

Legal regulations of the hours of work is considered by all thinking persons as real progress in protective legislation. In many cases the effect has been beneficial, but in some others, including certain large woman-employing industries, a reduction of hours caused employers to require of all workers the same output under considerably shortened hours as was their average with a longer day. Different methods of achieving this have been tried. Among these should be mentioned, increasing the speed of the machines that each worker must operate. As a result, the less-adaptable women have suffered from nervous strain that has caused illness and loss of time.

### The Webbs and "Socialism in Russia."

A few years ago the Bolsheviks rightly ridiculed the claim of the Webbs and other Fabians to be regarded either as Socialists or as authorities on Socialism. Now the trading and financial needs of the Russian Government have come uppermost at Moscow and the support of influential foreigners is sought irrespective of their political principles. In consequence, Shaw, the Webbs, and Mr. H. G. Wells, along with many others, have been elevated to positions of honour. Possibly the change represents a conversion of leading Bolsheviks to the Fabian point of view, but, more probably, the private opinion held of the Fabians in Bolshevik circles remains as contemptuous as ever.

The Webbs have published a huge volume in which they describe their conversion to the worship of Bolshevism, now that they recognise in it the

kind of regimented, bureaucratic capitalism they and the Fabians generally have preached for a lifetime. It is hoped to publish shortly in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD a review of the book. In the meantime, it is worth while recalling one or two facts about the Webbs which alone justify our refusal to admit that they are competent to speak for or about Socialism.

In the year 1935 they accept Russia as an example of Socialism at work. But what do the Webbs understand by "Socialism"? Earlier statements of theirs will show.

In "A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain," by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (published by the Fabian Society in 1920), they make the staggering announcement that "over a large part of Europe definitely Socialist administrations are actually in office, and the principles of Socialism are avowedly accepted as the basis of social and economic reconstruction."—(Preface.)

If by "Socialism" they meant what Socialists mean by the term, they were guilty either of deliberate falsehood or of incredible blindness. Alternatively, if they really knew what was the condition of this "large part of Europe" then they were using the term "Socialism" to mean something which has no relation whatever to Socialism as Socialists understand it. They were ranking themselves with the muddle-headed people who said "we are all Socialists now," because of the greater degree of intervention of the capitalist State in industry acting for and on behalf of the capitalists as a whole.

Two years later, Mr. Sidney Webb delivered this gem:—

My Socialism is founded on the four rules of arithmetic, the ten Commandments and the Union Jack.—(*Daily Herald*, March 1st, 1922.)

Now, in 1935, the Webbs, after visiting Russia, find in that land on an even huger scale the kind of State capitalist enterprises that charmed them in 1920. No wonder they are highly delighted.

Socialists, having no reason to change their consistent view as to the non-Socialist outlook of the Webbs, are not impressed. Need we add that those workers who were taken in by the Webb's vision of "Socialist" Europe in 1920, and have now recovered, will in due course learn the truth about Russia?

### "The Ablest Thinkers of the Old World"

It is always funny to see how easily the Communists discover black to be white and white black when some interest of the Russian Government is at stake. During and after the Great

War, the Communists, from Lenin downwards, could find no abuse too scurrilous for the Webbs. They were flunkies, social-patriots, betrayers of the working class, patient collectors of facts, but lacking in any understanding of working class interests and Socialism. In particular, they were charged with misleading and spoiling the most promising young men in the trade union and Labour movement by overloading their brains with multitudinous details and adding them with capitalist theories. A copy of *The Communist*, picked almost at random (July 22nd, 1922), contains half-a-dozen contemptuous references to the ideas and activities of the Webbs, and a demand that the Communists should adopt as their slogan "Save the Labour Movement from Webbism, MacDonaldism and Hendersonism."

Now all that is changed, and the *Labour Monthly* (January, p. 3), once foremost in denouncing the Webbs, tells us, without a smile or a blush, that the Webbs are "the ablest and most far-seeing thinkers of the old world."

### Who can Defend Democracy?

Mr. J. Middleton Murry never desists from his self-imposed task of squaring Socialist principles with the non-Socialist Labour Party programme. His latest ingenuity, set out in the *Adelphi* (January, 1936), is "super-political Socialism."

The theory of this oddity is that Socialists should support the Labour Party because the "maintenance of effective political democracy" is "an objective more important—to speak paradoxically—than the achievement of Socialism itself," and a "strong Labour Party is the only means that exists to secure the maintenance of effective political democracy."

He agrees that the Labour Party is not a Socialist Party, and will not bring Socialism, and that "it will bring us, probably, to some form of State-Capitalism." Nevertheless, we should support it, he says.

This is a good example of muddled thinking, plausible only because it is obscured by a lot of skilful writing—words, after all, are Mr. Murry's trade. If, instead of playing with paradoxes like another word-spinner, Mr. G. B. Shaw, he had asked himself a few simple questions, Mr. Murry would never land himself in these mazes. First of all, he should ask himself whether, in practice, Labour Parties are effective means of protecting democracy? They may, in the main, want to protect it, but that is a very different thing. "Strong" Labour Parties in Italy, Austria, Spain, Germany, and elsewhere, have been preludes to dictatorship, and for a very good reason. Workers who cherish the illusion that democratic, Labour-governed, State-capitalism will prove bene-



ficial to them are bound to be disillusioned. What then, is their very natural next step? They go back to Conservative "National" governments, or else try a new kind of capitalism, the kind governed by dictators. In other words, the surest way to discredit democracy is to have capitalism run by democratic Labour Parties.

In conclusion, may we suggest that Mr. Murry's enthusiasm for democracy is itself very much under suspicion? Only a month earlier (*Adelphi*, December) he wrote this:—

In Russia itself, they had been compelled to stifle the faint beginnings of political democracy; and I make no doubt at all that they were quite right to sabotage the abortive Constituent Assembly at the beginning of 1918.

#### Lord Beaverbrook on Russia

The development of Russia on capitalist lines proceeds apace, but no faster than the acceptance of it in capitalist circles. The *News Chronicle*, on December 5th, published an article on the new-rich Russian authors, playwrights, journalists, inventors, etc. Mention is made of Schkwardin, the playwright, who is now drawing 300,000 roubles a year (£12,500) as royalties on his comedies. He is perhaps the richest of the new-rich in Russia, according to the writer of the article.

Then, on December 31st, Dr. T. Varsilief, of the Russian Trade Delegation, addressed the Hampstead Rotary Club on conditions in his country. (See report in *Hampstead and Highgate Record*, January 3rd.) The report contains the following:—

Replying to questions, the speaker said that people in Russia possessed private property and banking accounts; that they were quite free to follow any or no religion, but he could not say whether Rotary would be possible there.

Last of all, Lord Beaverbrook is taking up the Bolshevik Fatherland. His *Sunday Express*, on December 29th, contained two interesting expressions of opinion. One, in the City Column, informs us that "Russia is developing steadily into a great capitalist State," while the other, in the Editorial Column, informs us that the Russian Government is a good Government:—

Stalin spends £6,000,000 for a Soviet "Hollywood." Russia, he says, must come first in all the arts. In Moscow, Shakespeare's plays are drawing crowds. Now army officers are to be distinguished by gay uniforms and badges.

Day by day the Russian leaders are turning more towards the arts and social distinctions. It is a sign of the stability of their régime. That is a good sign. For the Russian Government, a good Government, desires peace.

#### Humanising War

The allegations of bombing of Red Cross units in Abyssinia, and the counter-charge of dum-dum bullets, are a timely reminder of the futility of trying to "humanise" war. Apart from the

fact that all war is an atrocity, agreements to refrain from particular methods of waging war are always disregarded by that power which stands to gain most by breach of the agreement. Referring to the proposals to abolish unrestricted submarine warfare, the Naval Correspondent of the *Observer* writes:—

We cannot pin our faith to peace-time enactments for the "humanisation" of submarine warfare, which are capable of very wide interpretation in practice, and limit very largely the potency of submarines as weapons. By a nation fighting for its existence these rules are no more likely to be observed than were the pre-War regulations which forbade the bombardment of open towns; the "discharge of projectiles and explosives from balloons, or by other new methods of a similar nature," and the use of projectiles "the only object of which is the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases."

War, so long as it exists, will be horrible. No methods will be neglected by the unscrupulous if they contribute to possible victory. Moreover, war no longer applies only to the armed forces of the State; but to its every inhabitant. It is folly to think otherwise.—(*Observer*, January 5th.)

H.

## New Premises for the S.P.G.B.

The New Premises Fund Committee have asked us to publish the following:—

"Dear Fellow Worker,

"You will remember reading some months ago that the Party had decided to make an appeal for £300 for the purpose of transferring the Party headquarters to new and larger premises. You will recollect that new premises are necessary owing to the expiry of the lease on our present premises, and that larger premises are necessary in order to carry on the increasing activities of the Party. The present premises are inadequate even for our present manifold activities, such as meetings of the Executive and sub-committees, lectures, socials, secretarial, café, library, and so on. The need for new premises, therefore, goes hand in hand with the need for larger premises.

"The response to our appeal has so far been good. £106 has been contributed to date. We cordially thank all those who have donated amounts, however small, which have been instrumental in the raising of this sum. Still further efforts are required, however, if we are to collect the desired sum in the stipulated time. The time, in fact, is now running short, and only a few months are now left in which to collect the balance of £194. Below we give the latest list of donations from those who want Socialism.

"Now, fellow reader, it is up to you. If you are a member of the Party, make a special donation to your Branch or to the Treasurer, to be earmarked for this purpose. If you are not yet a member of the Party, the Treasurer will be

glad to receive your contribution direct, a receipt will be sent to you, and your donation will be acknowledged in these columns. Special efforts are being made through all branches and by other means in order to collect the necessary amount, and we shall endeavour to show in these columns next month to what extent our efforts have been responded to. We are pleased to acknowledge the following:—

P. E. D., £1 12s. 10d.; H., 3d.; J. C., 2s.; B. B., 2s.; C. E. S., 2s. 6d.; Southwark Branch, £2 2s. 9d.; Tooting Branch, 13s.; Chiswick Branch, 5s.; S. W. T., 5s.; H. G., 5s.; Islington Branch, 11s.; E. M. H., 5s.; Leyton Branch, 10s.; A. H. S., 3s.; Bloomsbury Branch, £3 3s.; Ilford Branch, 10s.; Lewisham Branch, 2s.; West London Branch, £3; West London Branch, £1 5s. 3d.; Manchester Branch, £1 10s.; Dagenham Branch, 7s. 6d.; N. K. O., 2s. 6d.; B. W., 2s. 6d.; Gold, £1; H. G., 5s.; West Ham Branch, £2 6s. 4d.; T. B. & V., £2 4s. 9d.; A. H., 2s. 6d.; T. L. L., 10s.; Battersea Branch, £1 7s. 6d.; M. B., £5; G. M., 4s. 6d.; W. G. F., 5s.; C. E. S., 10s.; H. B., 2s.; Tottenham, 14s.; A. McF., £1; W. M., 10s.; F. A. S., 2s. 6d.; A. M. I., 2s. 6d.; E. P., £1; G. F., 2s. 6d.; N. W. S., 2s.; R. M., 2s.; C. W. W., 2s. 6d.; Anon., 10s.; S. S. B. No., £1; Esperantisto, 2s. 6d.—£40 6s. 4d.; Brought forward, £65 18s.; Total, £106 4s. 4d.

"This means a total of £40 6s. 4d. contributed since our last acknowledgment. Now, comrades, keep on at this rate, and we shall soon have arrived at the immediate goal."

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DONATIONS TO GENERAL FUND.

T., 10s.; L., 5s.; B., 5s. 6d.; L., 4s.; E. H., £1; S., 5s.; L., 4s.; W. G., 10s.; T. I., 2s. 11d.; W. H. B., £2 5s.; A., 12s. 6d.; P. Books, £1 12s.; E. B., 9d.; P. Books, 6s.; N. I. M., 10s.; P. Y., 2s.; Croydon, 2s. 6d.; McC., 2s. 6d.; W. H. T., 1s. 3d.; Bloomsbury Branch, £1 10s.; J. B., 1s. 4d.; J. C., 2s.; E. M., 2s. 6d.; S. M., 2s. 6d.; J. B., 2s.; Bloomsbury Branch, £3; E. S., 1s. 6d.; J. W. L., 2s.; F. E., 4s.; A. C., 2s. 6d.; S. W. C., 2s. 6d.; Central Branch, 18s. 8d.; Bloomsbury Branch, £1; W. 3s.

#### BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty Street (corner of Guildford Street, W.C.1).

Feb. 10	"Rise and Fall of Mussolini"	E. HARDY
17	"Shakespeare and Socialism"	C. LESTOR
24	"More Russian Music"	A. LANCASTER
Mar. 2	"The Struggle for the World's Resources"	KATHLEEN DEVEREUX
9	"Can League Prevent War"	E. LAKE
16	"Science and Materialism, Past and Present"	C. DEVEREUX
23	"Who are the Bandits in China?"	G. CLIFFORD
30	"The Transition from Capitalism to Socialism"	A. KOHN

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

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## Book Review

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT. By Frederick Engels. Published by Martin Lawrence, Ltd. 1s.

THE above booklet contains eleven articles written by Engels and published in the *Labour Standard* during 1881. This journal was an attempt of the London Trades Council to provide a working-class organ in this country. The people in control of the paper were not, however, Socialists, but tended to support Gladstone, the Liberal. Hence it is not surprising that soon Engels' contributions to the *Labour Standard* caused concern to these champions of the working class, and he was requested to tone down his writings. This Engels refused to do. As a result, he ceased to contribute articles to the *Labour Standard*.

The first four articles deal with the wages system and the trade unions. Engels shows how, under capitalism, there is a class struggle between the working class and capitalist class, between those "people deprived of all property in the means of production, owners of nothing but their own working power" and "the monopolisers of the whole of the means of production, land, raw materials, machinery" (p.12).

Engels shows how the trade unions have helped their members to maintain their standard of life in this struggle, but it is pointed out that, despite their fight of sixty years against capital, the trade unions have been unable to raise the working class above the situation of wage slaves (p. 12), and that any advantage gained by the workers through their unions is brought to nothing by the crises which occur periodically. Then, the fight has to be undertaken again. In this never-ending struggle with the capitalist class, the workers are at a disadvantage. First, the army of unemployed help to keep down wages: workers compete for jobs, and this enables the capitalist class to enforce lower wages. Again, if the employer and his work-people do not agree over wages, and there is a strike, the former have the advantage, for they "can afford to wait, and live on their capital. The workman cannot. He has but wages to live upon, and must therefore take work when, where, and at what terms he can get it. . . . He is fearfully handicapped by hunger" (p. 10).

In face of this, Engels' advice to the working class is clear. It cannot hope for an end to its misery and striving under capitalism. It must abolish capitalism and establish Socialism; it must "become the owner of all the means of work—land, raw material, machinery, etc.—and, thereby, owner of the whole of the produce of its own labour." To do this, the workers must organise politically, because "a struggle between two great classes of



society necessarily becomes a political struggle," and they must win political power "to become enabled to change existing laws in conformity with their own interests and requirements."

Of the other articles, "Social Classes—Necessary and Superfluous" calls for special mention. This article contains the reply to those who do not study Socialism, because, as they say, we cannot do without capitalists. Here Engels shows what has been the historical mission of the capitalist class, to develop the means of production to the point they have reached to-day, i.e., so that they are capable of producing goods in abundance. But as the means of production are developed, the capitalist becomes unnecessary—a parasite, drawing profits without doing any kind of work. In the early days of capitalism, he worked with his employees, he supervised their work. Now, the formation of large companies has put an end to this state of affairs. Paid employees run industry from top to bottom. "The capitalist owners of these immense establishments have no other function left

with regard to them, but to cash the half-yearly dividend warrants" (p. 44).

Opponents of Fascism would do well to read Engels' article, "Bismark and the German Working-men's Party." Here they will learn that Hitler's methods were used as far back as 1880. Bismark outlawed the Working-men's Party, suppressed its fifty newspapers, seized its funds, broke up its societies and clubs and dissolved its meetings. Workers suspected of carrying on propaganda were kept in prison without trial. In one year (October 6th, 1879, to October, 1880) there were more than eleven thousand political prisoners. Still, these methods did not stamp out the ideas of the movement. We may add that Bismark failed to keep the workers quiet because he did not abolish capitalism—a system of society which, thanks to its very nature, forces the workers to turn to Socialism as the way out of their poverty. Incidentally, Socialism alone will save the workers from the ever-recurring brutalities of capitalism, then called Bismarkism, now Hitlerism. C. A.

### BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from Dec. 11th, over "Ralphs Café," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding, "Bosra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to J. Higgins, 18, Balgair Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., T. Conway, 45, Walford Road, N.16.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month in McIntyre's Hall, 151, Lowwaters, at 7 p.m. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 142, Richmond Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Dick Jacobs, 12, Clifford Rd., Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. N. Taylor, 167 Croydon Road, Anerley, S.E.10.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Cafe, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester. Lectures every Sunday evening, at 7.30 p.m., at above Cafe.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street. Meeting on 7th October.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., H. Solley, 28, Gore Road, Victoria Park, E.9. Branch meets on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Cafe, 9, Manningtree Street (2nd Floor), Commercial Road, (near Gardiner's Corner). Lectures fortnightly at above address.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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*Apathy is the  
rank soil from  
which . . . . .  
dictatorships  
rear their ugly  
heads. Apathy  
is the morass  
which retards  
the march to  
Socialism*

## THE TERROR IN EUROPE

**T**ERRORISM by governments towards political opponents has again become so much a commonplace with the rise of the post-war dictatorships that it receives little attention in the daily Press. Many of the incidents have become a mere matter of routine and do not secure publicity at all except in journals associated with the victims. We give below a sample of the cases reported in various quarters during the space of a few days in February.

The first—a very mild case—is a report from Geneva that the Swiss Government has threatened to suppress *Le Travail*, a Social-Democratic paper, unless it ceases to publish attacks on Germany and Italy. The editor replies (*Daily Herald*, February 10th): "We shall

continue more than ever to denounce the villainies, atrocities and crimes of the Hitlerite and the Fascist Italian régimes." The complete suppression of all independent organisation and publishing in Germany and Italy are well known, as also the wholesale condemnation of political opponents to prisons, concentration camps and penal

islands. In the early days of the Hitler régime the brutalities practised on defenceless (and usually untried) prisoners were much in the public eye, but with the consolidation of Hitler's power the brutalities are ceasing to be "news," and at the same time the German Government's efforts to prevent any disclosures have become more successful. In time, German Nazism from this point of view will be whitewashed, as had already happened with Italian Fascism until the Abyssinian War gave the English Press a reason to feature Fascist atrocities again. It has recently reported brave individuals who have shouted public denunciations of the war, followed, of course, by immediate arrest. A young Italian professor, Antonio Presenti, aged 25, has recently been arrested and charged with being in contact with anti-Fascists abroad and with holding views opposed to the war and to the Government. The trial was conducted in secret but, on recent experience in similar cases, it is expected that he will have been sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment (*Manchester Guardian*, February 8th). From Germany the same newspaper published on February 5th an account of the trial of 628 prisoners in Wuppertal, a town in Western Germany. Their crime is that of organising illegal strikes against wage reductions and dismissals in Hitler's "Socialist" Germany. As is common in Germany to-day, the prisoners were tortured to secure the names of their accomplices. Seven, whose names are given, are reported to have been beaten to death and three others died of injuries. One batch of sixty prisoners has already been sentenced to terms of penal servitude ranging up to fifteen years.

From Lithuania, whose Government is at the

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moment fiercely quarrelling with Hitler's Government, comes news of peasant leaders being sentenced to penal servitude ranging from two to four years after courts-martial at which the prisoners are undefended, there are no witnesses, and no publicity. Lithuania has just celebrated its "Independence Day," rejoicing that it is free from the yoke of Russia!

Then there are Austria, Hungary, Russia and Spain, not to mention India, and quite a number of other places in which the "friends of freedom" who have control of the political machine find excuses to prevent the expression of opinion and the functioning of working class trade union and political organisations.

Z. Szanto, Communist, writes to the *Manchester Guardian* (February 10th), after serving eight and a half years' imprisonment in Hungary to call attention to the cruelties of solitary confinement imposed on other political prisoners in that country. Immediately above Szanto's letter is another describing the horrors of the Terror in Soviet Russia. It tells of political prisoners (Social-Democrats and others) arrested by the Bolshevik authorities and sentenced without trial to banishment or concentration camps for illegal political activities (i.e., the carrying on of any propaganda contrary to the views of the ruling clique). The letter is signed, simply, "For freedom." The *Manchester Guardian* points out, very tellingly, that outside Russia the Bolsheviks plead for a united front with Social-Democrats but inside Russia "that united front exists only in the prisons, the concentration camps, and the places of exile."

On the same theme, the New York *New Militant* (January 25th) publishes a first-hand account of the arrest and exile without trial of a number of Yugo-Slav Communists who were visiting Russia. They were charged with being connected with the Trotskyist opposition. They hunger-struck on more than one occasion and complain of brutalities by the armed prison guards.

This is only one of many such reports about the treatment of political opponents in Russian jails. Another case is that of Eva Broida, reported in the *News Bulletin* of the Labour and Socialist International (January 23rd). She was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, followed by five years' banishment, for the crimes of being in Russia without a passport and of conducting illegal political propaganda in association with the illegal Menshevik Party. She is a veteran of the Russian Labour movement and is sixty years of age.

When we read of these things we are confirmed in the view maintained unceasingly by the S.P.G.B. throughout its existence that the possibility of carrying on Socialist propaganda, which democratic capitalism affords, is far too valuable to the Socialist movement to be lightly endangered.

Hence our opposition to all who would interfere with it. We are as much opposed to those who claim to do so in the name of the Communist Party as to those whose aim is avowedly to help capitalism. The S.P.G.B. is proud of the fact that it has set a unique example in keeping an absolutely open platform on which our opponents of all shades can state their case against us without restriction as to subject matter. Although willing to use our offer we notice that hardly any of our opponents have been willing to follow our example.

The S.P.G.B., while not forgetting that all the jails of all the countries are filled with prisoners whose crimes are, for the most part, the direct outcome of capitalist exploitation and capitalist property laws, offers its special tribute to the courageous few who are striving secretly under the dictatorships, with their liberties and even their lives in their hands, to keep aloft the banner of working class emancipation.

P. S.

## J. R. MacDonald and the War

IN our December issue it was stated that Mr. MacDonald was compelled to resign from the leadership of the Labour Party at the outbreak of the war because of his opposition to the war. In order not to mislead readers who are unfamiliar with the attitude of Mr. MacDonald then and during the war years, we wish to make it clear that at no time was his opposition to the war based on a recognition of the Socialist principle that no working class interests are involved in war between national groups of the capitalist class. His case was that this country could and should have kept out of that particular war. Once the war had begun he argued that it was necessary for the British Government to continue in the conflict, until, as speedily as possible, peace could be negotiated on terms satisfactory to his point of view. This led him into actions such as his letter to the Mayor of Leicester in connection with recruiting, in which he stated that he wanted "the serious men of the trade unions, the brotherhoods and similar movements, to face their duty," i.e., to enlist. This question of Mr. MacDonald's wartime activities has been dealt with on several occasions in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. See, for example, the issues for November, 1929, and November, 1930.

### "The Socialist Party of Great Britain and Questions of the Day"

Deals with the founding of the Socialist Party, the Liberal, Tory, Labour and Communist parties and the I.L.P., the Russian Dictatorship, War, Trade Unions, Social Reforms etc.  
80 Pages—Price 3d. (Post free—4d.)

## Frederick Engels

A BIOGRAPHY BY GUSTAV MAYER. (Pub. Chapman & Hall. 15s. 323 pages)

FREDERICK ENGELS has so often been referred to as the co-worker of Marx, that it is really surprising that Mayer's book is the first biography. Though Engels collaborated with Marx from the days of their youth until Marx's death, he lived so much in the shadow of the dominant personality and the brilliant intellect of Marx that his real place in the partnership has been difficult to assess. Engels, like Marx, was not of working class parentage. His father was a prosperous mill-owner and Marx's father a lawyer. Engels was born at Barmen, one of Germany's earliest industrial towns. At the time of his youth, Germany, later than England and France, was in the throes of social and political conflicts, which were the result of incipient capitalism. He was highly sensitive to the intellectual controversies of the time. Strauss' "Life of Jesus" undermined his belief in Christianity, in which he had been well primed in his childhood. Before he was twenty he was writing poetry, debating Hegelian philosophy, and challenging the accepted ideas of leading philosophers and writers, in pamphlets and articles to the Press. The social and intellectual ferment of the time, and the miserable conditions of the workers in his father's factory, profoundly influenced him and prepared his mind for those definitely Socialist ideas which he evolved a few years later.

After leaving high school, Engels entered the army for one year as a volunteer. It was this brief period in the army that laid the foundation for the reputation he achieved later on as an expert in military warfare. He early described himself as a Communist, and took an active part in the risings in Germany, greatly shocking his respectable parents. He was coerced into a business career which he disliked intensely. When, however, he was offered a salaried position in a mill his father had purchased in Manchester in 1842, he accepted with enthusiasm, because of the opportunity it gave to study industrial conditions where they were more highly developed than in any other place in the world. Manchester was then the world's industrial capital. On his way to England he visited the offices of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, and met Marx. The first meeting is said to have been cool and unfriendly. Marx wrote to Bruno Bauer that he wanted nothing to do with the "Atheist and Communist."

Once in Manchester, Engels studied industrial capitalism at first hand. He joined and became active in the Chartist movement, and became acquainted with most of its leaders. He read the literature which dealt seriously with the social questions of the time, and wrote for the Chartist newspapers and for the German *Rheinische*

*Zeitung*, of which Marx was editor. Two essays he wrote at this time, and which drew attention, were one on Carlyle's "Past and Present" and a "Sketch for a Critique of Political Economy." In the latter work he dealt with financial crises and the accumulation of capital. In later years, Marx referred to the work as having "genius," and declared that "Engels had discovered the decisive objection to Ricardo's theory of ground rent." Engels was instrumental in putting Marx right on this question.

Engels' writings while still a young man show that he understood the place of capitalism in social evolution, and that the historic mission of the working class was Socialism. A keen student and observer, he had formed these ideas before his collaboration with Marx, and had in some respects anticipated him. His book, "The Condition of the Working Class in 1844," written in 1844-5, the year that he commenced his life association with Marx, is evidence of this.

The year 1845 found both of them in Manchester (Marx at Engels' pressing invitation) studying at the Subscription Library rooms. Marx used the opportunity to read and take extracts from the works of Sir William Petty, Thomas Cooper the Chartist, T. P. Thompson, William Cobbett, and—most important of all—Thomas Tooke, whose "History of Prices" and sketch of the Corn Trade during the preceding two centuries, fascinated Marx. Engels had the opportunity of renewing his intimacy with Mary Burns, the Irish working girl, who introduced him to proletarian circles and enlarged his sympathy for the Irish workers in their sufferings.

The following years, until he returned to England in 1849, Engels took an active part with Marx in the political risings in Europe. During this period he wrote jointly with Marx several works, the most important being the "Communist Manifesto." Each produced his own draft of this work with great care before the finished version was ultimately published. The style of writing in the published version, the powerful urgency of its message, is unmistakably the work of Marx. Apart from the difference in form, however, it contained nothing that had not appeared in the earlier writings of Engels (especially in "German Ideology," which had not found a publisher). Marx, with Engels' permission, used material from this work to write his book on Proudhon.

Marx held a very high opinion of Engels' abilities. He is quoted by Mayer as having said of Engels: "He can work at any hour of the day or night, fed or fasting; he writes and composes with incomparable fluency." And many years later, in a conversation with Engels, he



remarks: "You know that in the first place everything comes late with me; and, secondly, that I always follow in your footsteps." If this estimation of Engels is a correct one, then it would seem that the more profound, if slower, mind of Marx was less inclined to hasty judgment and error. Engels' optimism in the Chartist movement, and his view that succeeding industrial crises would result in a widespread acceptance of Socialist principles among the workers and would present the capitalists with insuperable difficulties in the world's markets, were not justified by events. At one time he came very near giving his endorsement to the Fenian (Nationalist) movement in Ireland: Marx's clear-sightedness, however, prevented his doing so. Marx was very critical of the movement and constantly warned Engels. His letter of November 28th, 1867, bore fruit, and, two days later, Engels gave evidence of complete agreement with Marx's sceptical attitude. In fact, Engels went further than mere criticism, and denounced the Fenian leaders as asses, conspirators and exploiters (Letter of November 30th, 1867).

Engels' time was divided between his business interests and his studies and writings. He would gladly have forsaken the former for the latter, but was constrained by quite impersonal considerations. At first he was only his father's salaried employee. When ultimately he became a partner he would not sell his interest in "the firm," because the capital realised would not have been sufficient to provide an income for both himself and Marx. Marx's poverty was painful to him, and he made great sacrifices to lighten its pressure. That nothing that could be prevented should interrupt Marx's studies was, to Engels, of first importance.

Mayer repeats the statement that various articles formerly attributed to Marx were really written by Engels, but the position still appears to be by no means clear. Mayer says (p. 137) that Engels, between August, 1851, and October, 1852, "wrote a group of articles 'Germany, Revolution and Counter Revolution'"; and on page 142, "he wrote many of Marx's articles on current affairs in the *New York Tribune*, and later, in the Breslau *Neue Oder-Zeitung*."

Karl Marx's daughter, Eleanor, in her preface (written in 1896) to *Revolution and Counter Revolution*, says nothing of this. Indeed, she quotes Engels as saying of them that they were "excellent specimens of that marvellous gift of Marx . . ."—surely an odd thing to say if he wrote them himself. Riazanov, in his *Marx and Engels* (p. 105), describes Engels as having "performed the major task," calls him "the author" of the articles, and says that they were written "on the basis of the articles which they had both been writing for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* . . ." Riazanov also states that "one year later" (i.e., in 1852) Marx had "gained sufficient mastery of

the English language to be able to write his own articles."

Perhaps the correspondence of Marx and Engels will enable this point to be cleared up, but so far the statements made about it are not satisfactory.

Perhaps the most surprising of Engels' many activities is the reputation he made as a military writer. He wrote articles on the Austro-Prussian War in the *Manchester Guardian*, which were quoted and plagiarised by newspapers all over the world. Engels was, however, hopelessly wrong in forecasting the defeat of Prussia. Anonymous writings of Engels in a pamphlet, *Po and Rhein*, and on the American Civil War, were attributed to famous military men. During the Franco-Prussian War he wrote sixty articles, entitled "Notes of the War," for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. These were described by observers as the most important articles on the war appearing at the time, and they were republished during the World War in book form.

In private life he was a good "mixer." He "rode to the hounds" with the "gentry," but lived in a working class district in Manchester, and enjoyed both. He formed a union (without legal ceremony) with Mary Burns, and after her death with her sister, Lizzie. He was devoted to them both. To make Lizzie Burns' last moments happy he married her on her death-bed. He had a healthy contempt for Bohemian habits and for the moral and physical sloth (mistaken for revolutionary attributes) of the emigres among whom Marx lived in London.

It is perhaps idle to speculate on what Engels might have achieved had he been able to follow the studious life of research that Marx did. What he did achieve was amazing enough. Despite his business ties he managed to collaborate with Marx and supply him with enormous data for his economic writings, to write arduous theoretical works, and to contribute to the Press in all parts of the world enough matter to occupy the time of any one full-time journalist. He also acted as unpaid secretary in nearly a dozen languages, keeping in touch with working class organisations throughout the world.

After the death of Marx in 1883, he published the second and third volumes of *Capital* from the notes and papers left by Marx. Gustav Mayer describes Engels as one of the "most original thinkers of the 19th century." That description is not exaggerated. Unquestionably, without Engels the history of Socialist thought would make quite different reading to-day. This book certainly reveals Engels in a rôle much less modest than he claimed for himself, as well as it reveals many weaknesses in the views of Marx and Engels on certain 19th century events.

At fifteen shillings, Mayer's book is not likely

to have a very large sale among workers who are interested, and it is to be hoped that the publishers will issue a cheaper edition.

In the next edition, may we hope that Engels' relations with Samuel Moore, the Manchester barrister, tried and trusty friend of both Marx and Engels, will be explored more fully? Moore, whilst acting as Chief Justice of the Territory of the Niger Co., was actually translating

part of Vol. III of *Capital*, which was not even published in German until 1894. This information is derived from an unpublished letter, dated January 4th, 1889, from Engels to Dr. Danielson.

Mayer does not seem to have made any effort to unearth the part played by Moore in the translation and publication of each of the volumes of Marx's *Capital*.

H. W.

## Russia—More Letters

IN our January issue, under the heading "A Letter from Russia," we published a letter from a Russian worker. We omitted some comparisons between the wages of French and Russian workers on the ground that they were incomplete, taking no account of the low rents and other free services enjoyed by workers in Russia.

The writer of the letter now sends his comments on our editorial note, and we publish some of them as a matter of interest.

In the Soviet a family of 4-5-6 persons live in the same room or in dwellings. My father-in-law, who worked for 50 years as a simple mechanic in a weaving factory and had 13 children, paid absolutely nothing for rent under the Czarist régime; he, indeed, lived rent free, like other workers in great houses belonging to the factory-owner. Now he is a pensioner (79 years old) and receives only 35 roubles a month, out of which he has to take six roubles for a tiny room in that same house where, previous to the so-called revolution, he paid absolutely nothing. He buys black bread at the rate of 0.85 roubles for a kilogram (and could only eat that were I not to send him some financial help).

All possible extra wages in no way could compensate for the difference between the standard of living of French workers and Soviet Russian workers.

The truth is that in U.S.S.R. terrible misery rules, which no statistics can show. Only a very small part of the people, the newly-created class, or, more correctly, "caste," has a more or less decent life.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ings Road,  
Hull.  
January 11th, 1936.

Dear Sir,

I have been a reader of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for some considerable time now, but I must confess my disgust for your continued anti-Soviet propaganda, which you still publish in an unabated form.

As a young man and a student of politics and international affairs in general, I look upon the U.S.S.R. as the fatherland and beacon light of the working masses of the world, its leaders free from all thought of personal ambition and self-enrichment, and apprenticed to Communism through long years of exile and imprisonment, who, with superhuman courage, succeeded in establishing the first Workers' Republic in the world.

Seventeen years have elapsed since the Bolshevik seizure of power, and in those years they have been threatened, slandered, derided and abused, but in the face of all this and more they have consolidated their position, and with amazing rapidity set about improving the conditions of the Russian proletariat.

Month after month your paper continues to devote some of its space to mislead the workers about the U.S.S.R. In your last issue you publish the trans-

lation from a French Esperanto paper about the U.S.S.R. I do not doubt its French origin, as it is well known that Paris is the hotbed of "White" literature, but why no writer's name, and why the secrecy about the article? Surely no anti-Soviet writer should have any fear about his name being published in this country, (but, of course, the "O.G.P.U. is everywhere).

And so the world moves on: The Soviets from achievement to achievement, the Fascists from bankruptcy to war, the Capitalists from crisis to crisis, etc., etc. Now, let unity be the workers' watchword, and let us end for ever this system that starves you in peace and butchers you in war. Forward to a Soviet Britain!

Yours fraternally,

A. W. COOPER.

Reply.

The first half of this letter consists of unstinted praise of the Bolshevik leaders for having established "the first Workers' Republic" and for having, in the seventeen years since then, improved the conditions of the Russian workers. Our correspondent assumes that the present leaders in Russia are the ones who were in control in 1917, and assumes, further, that the official accounts of conditions in Russia represent the views of the Russian workers. The first assumption is largely wrong, because many of the "Old Bolsheviks" have been driven into obscurity, imprisoned or exiled, such as Zinoviev and Trotsky. The present leaders are responsible for this treatment of their predecessors. On which group does our correspondent mean to lavish his praise, on the jailers or the prisoners and exiles?

Secondly, it is usual in working class circles to consider the worker the best judge of his own conditions and grievances, but the Russian Government does not permit Russian workers to form their own voluntary trade union and political organisations, or to publish their own uncensored journals. For that reason it is impossible to get the Russian workers' unfettered comment on the claims of the Russian Government, except through secret channels. In our January issue we published a letter written in Russia by a Russian worker, in which he voiced his very strong dissatisfaction with the conditions there. Our correspondent saw this letter, but was apparently so enraged at the idea of anyone questioning the official propaganda issued by the Russian Government that he had no time to stop



and read it before sending off to us his wild assertions about Paris counter-revolutionaries.

The letter we published was written, as is plainly stated at the head of it, by a Russian worker in Russia. He wanted his name kept secret, because he knows quite well that disclosure would mean persecution, dismissal, and probable imprisonment. We have now heard direct from the writer of the letter, and, for those very good reasons, we still do not publish his name and address.

Mr. Cooper charges the S.P.G.B. with blindness, because we cannot see this workers' paradise in Russia. His is not the first charge of that kind. To go back no further than 1914 there have been several others. First, there were the Labour leaders who believed the capitalist promise that, as a reward for supporting the War, England would be made a "land fit for heroes." Immediately afterwards the I.L.P. and Labour Party discovered a Socialist paradise in Queensland, and the S.P.G.B. was subjected to heated abuse for publishing the unpalatable truth about conditions there. Then came the two Labour Governments, and again we were denounced for refusing to believe in the actual or imminent millennium. Now Russia is the "beacon light" of those who put faith before facts, and fear unpleasant truth more than they fear anything else. Well, Russia will pass like all the others, and the workers will still have to tackle their own problem of securing their own emancipation without trusting in leaders and short-cuts.

ED. COMM.

## Two Processions

### A Study in Class Distinctions

**A** KING of England has been buried. Amidst a display of pomp and ceremony his body was laid to rest at Windsor, where some of the Kings of England lie buried. Preceded by soldiers and naval ratings, the gun carriage carrying the coffin was drawn through the sorrowing streets of London followed by Edward the Eighth, the Royal family and the crowned heads of Europe, not forgetting Maxim Litvinoff and Marshal Tulashevsky of the Soviet Army. The entire pulpit, Protestant and Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian, Jewish and Mohammedan, were loud in their lamentations at the passing of this "good man."

The military were there, and the police of course, to keep the crowd in check. Stores and shops made profit by selling tokens of grief at hastily-raised prices.

A week later another procession passed through London. Another body was being "drawn" through London to its eternal rest. But this time there were no soldiers or police pressing the crowd into the gutter, for there was no crowd to mourn. No flags were flying at half-mast, no grief tokens

being sold, for no one was there to buy. But, nevertheless, the procession passed through, and, needless to say, Maxim Litvinoff and Marshal Tulashevsky were *not* there. A little child was being taken to its eternal rest—in a perambulator! The hospital authorities could not afford to send an ambulance.

Thousands of pounds spent on the funeral of one who is but the symbol of capitalism, but not a penny for an ambulance to relieve a young mother of her gruesome burden.

No bishops and priests mourned or denounced the vile effect of capitalism, although the doctor logged at the request of the coroner. As tough an apology can whitewash this iniquity!

Had this child been the son of some wealthy parvenu, or some work-shy parasite, instead of the child of a worker, we have no doubt that an ambulance would have been provided forthwith to remove the body to the Coroner's Office. How much longer are the workers to ignore the brutal and callous conditions forced on them by capitalism?

SCRUTATOR.

## MANCHESTER SOCIAL AND DANCE

A Social, Dance and Entertainment will be held on Sunday, 29th March, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., at Craigweil Cafe, Peter Street (opposite Theatre Royal). Subscription 1/-. Refreshments provided.

## LEYTON BRANCH A SOCIAL

A Social will be held on Saturday, March 14th, at 5 Upper Walthamstow Road (near L.N.E.R. Station). Cards, games, dancing, etc. Commence 8 p.m. Admission free.

## CHISWICK TOWN HALL

A Socialist rally will be held at Chiswick Town Hall (Hogarth Hall), on Thursday, 19th March, commencing 8 p.m.

Speaker - - - - G. CLIFFORD

All invited. Admission free. Questions and Discussion.

## HAMMERSMITH

A Lecture will be given on Sunday, 15th March, at 11 a.m., at Hampshire House Discussion Circle, Hampshire House, Hog Lane, King Street, Hammersmith, W.6.

Subject - - - "Socialism, Atheism and Religion"  
R. ROBERTUS

## CAMBRIDGE

Will sympathisers willing to assist in forming a branch at Cambridge get in touch with the Secretary at 56, Kendal Way, Milton Road, Cambridge.

## MEETINGS, LECTURES, &c.

### HEAD OFFICE

Lectures are given each Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

March 1	"Current Problems"	- E. HARDY
8	"Modern Times"	- NESBIT
15	"Open Discussion"	
22	"Nationalism and Socialism"	- G. CLIFFORD
29	"The Webbs on Soviet Russia"	- E. BODEN

### BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty Street (corner of Guildford Street, W.C.1).

March 2	"Can the League Prevent War"	- E. LAKE
9	"The Struggle for the World's Resources"	KATHLEEN FRANCIS
16	"Science and Materialism, Past and Present"	C. DEVEREUX
23	"Who are the Bandits in China?"	G. CLIFFORD
30	"The Transition from Capitalism to Socialism"	A. KOHN

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

### HACKNEY

Lectures are given each Friday Evening, at 8.30, at The Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, Hackney, E.9 (Back of Pavilion Cinema, Mare Street).

March 6	"Rise and Fall of Mussolini"	- E. HARDY
13	"Japan's Challenge to the World"	- A. KOHN
20	"History of the Comintern"	- S. CASH
27	"Trust Busting and the Working Class"	- SANDY

All invited. Admission free. Questions and Discussion.

### ILFORD

An address on "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM" will be given at the Ilford Branch of the National Union of Railwaymen, on Friday, April 3rd, at 8 p.m. at Central Labour Hall, 298, High Road, Ilford.

Speaker - - - G. BELLINGHAM

### MANCHESTER

Public Meetings, Sundays at 7.30. Craigweil Cafe, Peter Street (opp. Theatre Royal).

March 1	"Socialism and Social Credit"	- J. LEA
8	"Soviet Capitalism"	- E. BODEN
15	"Random Reflections"	- W. LEONARD
22	"Japan's Challenge to the World"	- A. KOHN
29	Social, Dance and Entertainment 7 p.m.—10 p.m.	

Subscription 1/- Refreshments provided

All invited Admission free Questions and discussion

### NOTTINGHAM

A Lecture will be given under the auspices of the Cosmo Debating Society at Nottingham University Forum, at 2.30 p.m., Shakespeare Street, on Sunday, March 22nd.

Subject - - - "The Materialism of Karl Marx"  
R. ROBERTUS.

Questions and Discussion.

### "SOVIET COMMUNISM."

A Review of the Webb's book, crowded out of this issue, will appear next month.

## EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

### ADMISSION FREE

#### At BATTERSEA BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8.0 p.m., at Latchmere Road Baths, Small Waiting Room (Burns Road).

March 12	"History of Parliament"	- F. EVANS
26	"Theories of Value before Marx"	- GOLDSTEIN

#### At CHISWICK BRANCH

Alternate Fridays at 8.30 p.m. at Fairlawn Restaurant, 452, High Road, Chiswick, W.4.

March 13	"The Internationals and the Commune"	- A. GEORGE
27	"General Strikes"	- CAMERON

#### At WEST HAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate.

March 5	"History of Trade Unionism"	- LAKE
19	"History of Parliament"	- CASH

#### At DAGENHAM and ROMFORD BRANCH

Fridays at 8 p.m., at Ralph's Café, 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath.

March 6	"Crises"	- E. HARDY
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#### At LEWISHAM BRANCH

Alternate Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road.

March 5	"Crises"	- E. HARDY
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#### At SOUTHEM BRANCH

One Wednesday each month, at 8 p.m.

March 18	"Theory of Value"	- CALLIS
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#### At STEPNEY BRANCH

Alternate Fridays, 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station).

March 20	"Money"	- WAITE
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## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturdays in each month.

March 21st.	3 p.m.	South Kensington (Geological) Museum
		"MOTHER EARTH" - REGINALD

April 4th	3 p.m.	National Gallery
		"ART AND CAPITALIST GROWTH" - KERSLEY

An extremely encouraging visit which was attended by about thirty people including a dozen or so non-members, was made to the London Museum on February 1st. Another large audience is anticipated when Comrade Stewart continues her lecture at the same Museum in the near future. In spite of the cold and fog on February 15th, a few members succeeded in finding the British Museum, and Comrade Devereux's application of the M.C.H. to Pottery was adequate compensation.

## GLASGOW

Members and sympathisers in Glasgow please note that the Glasgow branch will hold a special meeting on Sunday, 15th March, at 7.30 p.m., in the McLean Memorial Hall, 17 Saltmarket Place, with view to obtaining increased support for branch activities. All who accept the Socialist case should make a point of being present.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MARCH,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Smithfield Strike

THE strike of 10,000 Smithfield workers, on a demand for a £4 minimum and a five-day week of forty hours, and on a complaint that the Conciliation Board had delayed consideration of their case, was defeated in spite of a remarkable exhibition of solidarity among the strikers themselves. The fact that it was an "unofficial strike" deprived them of the backing of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and of dockers, whose help would no doubt have made a difference. Nevertheless, it seems that the major cause of their defeat was simply that supplies of meat were obtained through other channels. The *Daily Herald*, of February 4th, reported that, "instead of trying to break the strike, the employers have worked out a decentralised method of supplying their retail shops. Many of the multiple firms are taking meat direct from the ships at the docks by road. Even small shops have been able to draw lorry-loads of meat from some of the London docks."

Mr. Ian Mackay, in the *News Chronicle* (February 10th), wrote:—

Within a few hours, without any advance organisation whatever, the distribution of Londoners' meat was going on through the outlying markets, the railway yards and the wharves almost as if nothing had happened.

We are not prepared to accept the statement that there was no advance organisation, but one lesson is indeed obvious. The centralisation of the control of production and distribution, and the development of means of transport, have made sectional strikes in this kind of industry more and

more difficult to pull off. On the surface the difficulty should have been lessened by the existence of a union, such as the Transport and General Workers' Union, which has 500,000 members, caters for a wide range of related occupations and can hope to avoid delay in bringing out all the workers necessary to prevent "leakages." In practice, however, this advantage has on many occasions been lost, not only in the Union mentioned, through sections of workers getting at loggerheads with their own Union and coming to the conclusion that their only course is an "unofficial" strike. Quite apart from the restricted value of trade unionism, because the control of the State machine is in capitalist hands, it is evident that mere "big" unionism has left many problems of working class organisation yet unsolved.

## "Socialism" Everywhere

YEARS ago, Socialist propagandists used to point out to the reformists that their work of popularising old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, etc., would only end up with the openly capitalist parties dishing them by adopting the proposals for themselves and getting the credit. To clinch the matter, Socialists added that a time would come when the capitalists would steal the word "Socialism" itself and use it to gain a further lease of life for capitalism. Events have faithfully followed this anticipation. If what they say were really true, the workers' difficulty to-day would be to find some spot where Socialism isn't. First, there are Russia's 170 millions supposed to be living under Socialism. Now Germany, with its "National Socialist Party" in the saddle, has just been officially declared to be Socialist. The Berlin correspondent of the *Economist* (February 1st) writes as follows: "... it is affirmed that Socialism is under way (indeed, this week it is officially stated to have already replaced capitalism)." Then the three Scandinavian countries, with their Labour Parties in power, are described as "Socialist" in the English Labour Press, along with New Zealand and Western Australia. At home we have the old-fashioned section of the Labour Party still insisting that the Post Office is Socialism, while the new gang (Mr. Morrison) calls the Transport Board "socialisation," and tells us that we have a Socialist London County Council. Where the Government is not controlled by a Party calling itself Socialist, it often has one or more leaders who were Labour Party stalwarts, e.g., MacDonald and Thomas, Mr. Lyons the Australian Premier, and Mussolini and several of his colleagues.

Only knowledge of Socialist principles will make the workers proof against being misled by capitalist and Labour Party misrepresentation.

## A Chapter on Dialectical Materialism

(CONCLUDED)

"The Scientific Method of Thinking," by Edward Conzé, Ph. D., 5/- Chapman and Hall, publishers.

"IT is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence," says Marx, "but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness." Of course Marx did not mean that human existence and consciousness are entirely unrelated phenomena, since consciousness is obviously a part of existence. The meaning intended is that as men are grouped together either in tribal or civic societies, so does their social means of getting a living give rise to a general outlook or common ideology. In other words, a causal relationship exists between man's ideas and his material conditions of living. We mention this to indicate that Marxism is not a philosophy which emphasises the influence of environment at the expense of all human action. The same thesis is stated by Marx in another, and perhaps more definite, form, when he says, "Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth, he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of such as he finds close at hand."

From which it follows that in the Marxian sense man is the active agent in historical happenings, even though the conditions in which human beings find themselves form some sort of guiding background to their activities. Marxism is not fatalism any more than it is "idealism." To the fatalist the course of human history lies outside the pale of human

problem to be analysed and solved. The composition of class society involves conflicting interests which produce rival interpretations of social phenomena. A capitalist defender of capitalism can

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

effort—we are but puppets hovering and hobbling through life in accordance with some pre-determined force, ambiguously styled fate. To the idealist, history is the outcome of the machinations of men's "minds": we will things, so to speak, and lo and behold history is made for good or for bad. But both these forms of thought are incapable of explaining the varied and manifold phases assumed by human society at different times and places. In contradistinction to this, the Marxian concept may be given as an example of its own validity. It sees in the class structure of modern society the condition of its own birth and the means of its own fulfilment in the conscious social transformation of existing economic and political conditions—the active element in this process being the working class. But why this class alone, and not society as a whole, is a question which necessitates an understanding of a scientific method of thinking, such as we are now considering. It may, of course, be said that scientific method is essential, apart from the matter of working-class emancipation, to which we would readily assent. But there's the rub. Ours is a special task called forth by the peculiar nature of the



hardly view working-class problems in the same way and with similar results as the workers.

The ever-pressing economic needs arising from social status are bound to influence and determine judgment. Old Ludwig Feuerbach stressed this fact from another angle of view when he declared that, "One thinks differently in a palace than in a hut." To remove the conditions of the hut is the need of the working class alone; the capitalists have no such need and can be relied upon to retain possession of the "palace" so long as the working class permit.

It is upon this point that the dialectic of Marx, if rightly interpreted, will serve as a method of our unravelling the complex nature of capitalist society, and as a means toward Socialism.

It should be clearly understood, however, that dialectical materialism in its widest sense embraces a terminology, the subject matter of which needs special study. We have such phrases as "The Unity of Opposites," "The Negation of Negation," and "The Transformation of Quantity into Quality," all of which would necessitate lengthy explanations of their meaning. We suggest that the ablest account yet written is Engels' classic "Anti-Duehring." Here Engels presents us with examples of the actual working out of dialectical laws in nature, human history, and thought. In geology, chemistry, agriculture, mathematics and economics Engels gives an account of the way in which the dialectic operates, facts which impelled Engels to remark that "Men thought dialectically a long time before they knew what the dialectic really was, just as they spoke prose a long time before the term 'prose' was used."

In the immediate sense it is on the subject of social development and change that the knowledge of the dialectic is needed. The principle works as follows: The capitalist system makes the productive forces social in the sense that giant means of wealth production are brought into being requiring the combined operation of masses of workers. The workers in consequence are rendered more and more a subject class. The wealth is socially produced, but individually appropriated. The capitalist class who own the wealth the workers have produced see to it that only such portion of the wealth is allowed the workers as will permit them to maintain themselves as a dependent class. This causes a number of other anomalies to arise. Apart from the effect of the workers being compelled to endure poverty amidst plenty, there is the fact of the capitalists' failure to keep the productive forces continually operating. Further, they even stultify the otherwise expansion of the means of producing wealth, as their economic interests determine from time to time. The blows from all this fall heaviest upon the working class, which class is compelled sooner or later to seek a way out through taking over the means of

living in their own interest by establishing Socialism. The forces making for Socialism are, therefore, historically and socially conditioned by capitalism, as in a somewhat similar manner capitalism was conditioned by the social forces of feudalism. This historical process is described by Marx and Engels as "the negation of negation." Capitalism is negated by its own internal contradictions, just as it had negated feudal society through like causes. In their statement of this principle, both Marx and Engels used fairly clear-cut language to describe their point of view. We wish we could say the same of many who have set out to explain the meaning of dialectical materialism in general. The great danger hovering around the subject of dialectics seems to be with those who misuse it to *justify* every twist and turn of policy. We may be able to reconcile the irreconcilable as a form of thought, but our task chiefly consists of sifting the essential from the non-essential in our purpose. But let us now resume company with Dr. Conzé. He postulates what he considers to be the four laws of scientific method; they are as follows:—

- (1) "Think concretely, for everything is concrete."
- (2) "Everything must be studied in its movement and development, for everything changes continually."
- (3) "Wherever we may find opposites we must look for their unity. Opposites are always in unity."
- (4) "We must seek the contradictions in the processes of nature and society, for everything is put into motion by contradictions."

Regarding the latter, he rightly warns us to distinguish between contradictions of the mind and those of objective reality. Contradictions of the mind may "put" us into awkward "motion"—into the safe custody of a lunatic asylum. In discussing why dialectical materialism is so little understood, Dr. Conzé seems to think the Russian Bolsheviks to be among the chief causes. He says that "in casting out religion the Bolsheviks have elevated the fundamentals of Marxism to the level of a substitute religion," and further complains that the study of philosophical works is discouraged in Russia "on the ground that since Marxism is the philosophy of the proletariat, all other philosophies are bourgeois (which is partly true) and, therefore, deadly mental poison (which is ridiculous)." But be this as it may, we suggest that the main reason for the non-understanding of Marxism rests upon the fact of the pre-occupation on the part of the workers with the many phases of capitalist thought. On the subject of mind and economics in society, Dr. Conzé easily dismisses those "social psychologists" who are all mind and no economics, their failure to recognise the interaction of ideas and economic conditions being

well noted. In the case of mass psychology, these people are always apt to regard the "crowd" as "incapable both of reflection and reasoning." But Dr. Conzé falls into error when he attempts the same charge against Socialists. He asserts that "Socialists are also inclined to despise the masses when they see them desert to the enemy; they suddenly assume that demagogues can swing the masses round and so deprive them of their critical faculties that they will support their own enemies." But Socialists really know better than this. The workers swing from one political position to another because their minds are mainly on the capitalist roundabout. They have not yet realised that capitalism is their real enemy and the way to end it.

Regarding "Great men and history," Dr. Conzé contrasts two conflicting lines of thought—one which, à la Thomas Carlyle, regards history mainly as a "biography of great men," the other which denies the influence of great men totally, and counts the masses as everything.

In reply to this, Plekanov is well cited as saying that "If history is made by human beings,

it must obviously be made by 'great men' among the rest." To this, but under proper qualification, all Socialists will agree. Against those who concentrate on the destructive side of Socialist activity, whoever they may be, Dr. Conzé thinks with Blanqui that these people are "invaluable before a revolution, but should be shot the day after its victory."

However, in general, we think the author of "The Scientific Method of Thinking" has done well in bringing this volume to life despite the many things we could continue to discuss in disagreement. In the main, we agree with his statement of the dialectical standpoint, and commend his book to students, but in so doing we should like to refer those who are about to take their first plunges into materialist thought to one more statement of Marx. In his celebrated thesis on Feuerbach Marx says: "The life of society is essentially practical. All the mysteries which seduce speculative thought into mysticism find their solution in human practice and in concepts of this practice."

ROBERTUS.

## Notes by the Way

### Election News from Australia, Spain and New Zealand

In WESTERN AUSTRALIA, where there was a Labour Government before the election of February 15th, its majority has been reduced from ten to two.

The seats held by the various parties now are:—

Labour	...	...	...	26
National	...	...	...	10
Country Party	...	...	...	13
Independent	...	...	...	1
				50

The only forfeited deposit was that of a Communist candidate.

(*Manchester Guardian*, February 17th.)

In SPAIN the elections on February 16th were fought by two "united fronts," one of the "left" and one of the "right," each composed of several parties. The "left" front included the Labour Party, Communists, Syndicalists and Left Republicans. The issues which largely dominated the election, apart from economic problems, were the maintenance of the Republic against Catholic, Monarchist and Fascist groups, the withdrawal of Government censorship and suppression, and the release of 30,000 prisoners still awaiting trial for participation in the unsuccessful rising of October, 1934. The electoral programme of the "left" front included land settlement on the big estates,

which were taken over by the Government when the Monarchy was overthrown, but subsequently handed back again, restoration of the minimum wage in agriculture, and a general policy of supporting social reform, and permitting trade unions and Labour organisations to function.

Early returns indicate that the "left" front will have a clear majority, their seats totalling upwards of 260 out of 473; but while the Labour Party has increased its seats from sixty-one to over eighty, it is far below the success it achieved in 1931 at the first election under the Republic. At that election, with 117 seats, it was the largest single party.

Among the reasons for the Labour Party's decline from the position it held in 1931 are, first, the inevitable disappointment of its followers at the lack of results from participation in a Coalition Government, the grant of votes to women in 1933—their votes being given largely to the Clerical Party—the fact that the Syndicalists in 1933 abstained from voting, and a considerable amount of intimidation and electoral faking on the part of the Government.

At the time of writing, a "left" Government is anticipated, with the support of the Labour Party. Among the special problems it will have to face, besides the general problem of trying to make capitalism palatable to the workers, will be the demand for self-government in Catalonia, one of the "left" front strongholds, where local patriotism is strong.



Labour Government, or a Coalition backed by a Labour Party, will prove as disappointing in Spain as it has everywhere else. Nothing short of Socialism will solve the workers' problems.

In NEW ZEALAND a first Labour Government was elected in December, 1935, obtaining fifty-two seats out of a total of eighty. The new Premier, Mr. Michael Savage, hastened to assure the electorate that no drastic changes are contemplated in the social system. The programme at present announced deals largely with shorter hours and higher wages.

#### An Interesting Statement on Russian Trade

Mr. A. P. Rosengoltz, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade, explains in the January issue of the *Monthly Review* of the Soviet Trade Delegation why Russia does not propose to try to be self-supporting. His point is an interesting one, as illustrating how, in spite of the technical developments going on in each country, they are still dependent on each other.

We must bear in mind that in the capitalist world a large number of technical inventions and improvements are being made which are of great value for our construction. We must follow these technical inventions and utilise them. A few years ago our oil industry was on the same level as in the rest of the world, but in the last few years a number of technical inventions have been made in the United States which would be of great use to the Soviet Union. We are also interested in the obtaining of oil from coal, in the achievements in optical science, and so on. This shows that we must constantly study and follow the achievements of world technique and adopt all that is of use, and import, of course, all that is required for this purpose. We must also import a number of raw materials and semi-manufactures in order to be able to fulfil our economic plans with as little delay as possible.

One obvious development, which has indeed already been going on, is that Russia will tend to concentrate on those exports which can compete most successfully in the world market and to import the other articles. Mr. Rosengoltz pointed out, incidentally, that the import of cocoa in 1935 was ten times the amount imported in 1932.

#### "The Times" and Karl Marx

In our last issue an extract from a *Times* review of the life of Engels was published. It was appreciative of Engels' capacities and achievements, and contrasts strongly with the editorial on Marx which *The Times* published on March 14th, 1933, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his death. This editorial largely failed to understand Marx's point of view and his work. It charges him with "turning Hegelianism upside down, and pretending that he was really turning it right side up again, and with being 'untrue to his own scientific principles.'"

He did not elicit an inevitable and natural law of motion from his study of the play of economic

society. On the contrary, he imposed, or sought to impose, an ideal upon it. The revolutionary prophet conquered the would-be materialistic scholar, and deserting the pedestrian ground of economic evolution, he proclaimed a new dispensation for all the sons of toil. He was stirred, and he stirred the millions, with a visiting of the old prophetic ideal of Righteousness. . . . He made it speak of a new Liberty and a new Equality—a Liberty which should give the worker free control of the process of production, through his ownership of its instruments; an Equality which should make men equal, not merely in their rare appearances before the Courts or in the polling-booth, but in the common round of daily life and work.

*The Times* claimed that Marx forgot that the State "has striven hard to hold a fair balance between conflicting social forces, and to maintain, at the very least, a decent minimum of national life for the poorest of the poor." It was one of Marx's great pieces of work that he put the State on a firm basis, and showed that it cannot be treated as if it is a thing separate from and above the class which controls it. He would have asked *The Times* writer a simple question. Why, if the State is an impartial body, does it perpetuate the division of society into the rich on the one hand and the workers (including the "poorest of the poor") on the other?

#### Land Ownership in Great Britain.—Is your Name Here?

Mr. Basil Murray, writing in the *Evening Standard* (January 18th, 1935), and basing his figures mainly on "the estimates of men who for years have been concerned with the sale and management of great estates," claimed that the dividing up of great landed estates "has gone far less in this country than in any other in Europe. Broadly speaking, the largest estates of a century ago remain undiminished and in the possession of the same families to-day."

Among those he mentions are the Duke of Sutherland, nearly 1,000 square miles, and twelve others, each of whom possesses at least 100 square miles of England or Wales:—

Lord Leconfield (probably over 200,000 acres).

Duke of Bedford.

Lord Fitzwilliam.

Lord Zetland.

Duke of Westminster.

Duke of Devonshire.

Lord Derby.

Lord Leicester.

Lord Berkeley.

Lord Yarborough.

Lord Clinton.

Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn.

A few years ago Lord Derby sold a slice of Liverpool at a price reputed to be in the neighbourhood of £1,000,000. The Duke of Rutland has

sold a million pounds' worth of land in Derbyshire since the War.

#### Trade Union Unity

It is a good thing that the splits engineered by the Communists in the trade unions after the formation of the Communist International and its trade union sub-organisations, are now being removed. In France, after more than thirteen years of disunity, the rival federations and rival unions have amalgamated, with the result that numbers of workers who stood aside from both factions have resumed their membership and activity.

In this country the Communists were less successful in establishing separate unions than they were on the Continent, and one of their few ventures, the "United Mine Workers of Scotland," formed in 1929, was dissolved early this year. The resolution passed at the Conference which decided on dissolution was as follows:—

In accordance with the overwhelming majority ballot-vote decision of the members of the U.M.S. and in the light of the very important fight conducted by the Mineworkers' Federation of Great Britain for a two-shilling wage increase for all miners, along with the important decision of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Scottish Mineworkers to reject the Scottish coalowners' proposals to discuss district agreements in place of a national agreement, the Executive Committee of the U.M.S. has decided that the time has come when it is necessary to take the most decisive step for achieving unity by advising all members immediately to join the county unions. . . . This decision is for the sole purpose of strengthening the miners' fight and of building 100 per cent. trade unionism in the Scottish coalfield. (*Manchester Guardian*, January 2nd.)

In India the trade union movement was weakened by a split which occurred in 1926, and by another in 1931, leaving three rival groups of unions. Two groups re-united in April, 1935, and the two remaining bodies, the All-India T.U.C. and the National Federation of Trades Unions, have since been in negotiation. So far they have not been able to agree to amalgamate, but a Joint Board for co-ordinating the activities of the two organisations is in existence, and a proposal to give the Board executive power is now being considered. (See *Indian Labour Journal*, January 12th, 1936.)

Among the difficulties which led to the original splits were the questions of affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions, representation at the International Labour Conferences at Geneva, and political outlook. The entry of Russia into the League of Nations has caused the Communist sympathisers to withdraw their opposition to the Geneva organisation, although they still wish to stand outside the International Federation of Trade Unions.

#### Profits Going up Again

The *Economist's* Annual Survey of Industrial Profits shows the continued recovery of profit after the low levels recorded in 1932 and 1933. The

following table shows the rate of profit earned and the rate of dividend paid over a series of years. The figures for 1935 are based on 2,116 companies, whose total net profit (after payment of debenture interest, etc.) amounted to £203,247,000.

	Ratio of Profits to Ordinary Capital	Average Dividend on Preference Capital	Average Dividend on Ordinary Capital
	%	%	%
1909	7.4	4.3	6.3
1910	8.2	4.5	7.0
1911	9.9	4.9	8.5
1912	10.2	5.2	8.5
1913	11.7	5.1	10.2
1920	15.2	5.0	12.6
1921	10.3	5.2	10.2
1922	7.0	5.2	8.4
1923	9.8	5.3	9.3
1924	10.3	5.4	9.8
1925	10.9	5.5	10.3
1926	11.3	5.4	11.1
1927	10.5	5.3	10.8
1928	11.1	5.4	10.6
1929	10.5	5.5	10.5
1930	9.8	5.7	9.5
1931	7.2	5.2	7.2
1932	5.8	4.2	5.9
1933	6.1	4.6	5.8
1934	7.2	4.8	6.5
1935	8.5	5.2	7.4

(*Economist*, February 15th.)

#### Capitalist Interests Represented in Parliament

The February issue of the Co-operative Party's *Notes for Speakers* quotes from the *New Statesman* as follows, regarding the interests represented by Members of Parliament on the Government side:—

A total of 430 Government members are classified according to their interests as follows: Rentiers, 129; business men, 85; barristers, 52; solicitors, 7; brewers, 4; soldiers or sailors, 23; insurance, 6; railways and shipping, 17; retired public officials, 6; doctors, 9; accountants, 6; authors, 2; banking and finance, 11; electricity interests, 5; coal and iron, 7; architects, 2; newspaper and journalists, 13; agriculture, 10; engineering, 13; textiles, 4; working man, 1; aristocrats, 45; others, 18.

Virtually every important capitalist business or professional interest is thus well represented on the Government side of the House.

#### The Suppressors of News

Journalists and their masters, the newspaper proprietors, never cease to boast that in this country the Press is free and unrestricted, devoted only to the publication of news without prejudice or distortion. It is interesting, therefore, to have Lord Rothermere, the millionaire newspaper proprietor, stating in *The Evening News* (February 17th) that "The British Press, in compliance with official requests, has published little about the vast concentration of our naval forces" in the Eastern Mediterranean. It means that in times of peace suppression at the "request" of the Government is a normal practice. Possibly the recent favourable references to Russia in the Beaverbrook Press, *The Times* and elsewhere, may also be the result of hints from above, to be explained by the desire to smooth the way for closer military relationships. H.



## Socialists and Trade Unions

In our January issue we published a reply to letters about trade unions.

Mr. W. T. H. Raynor writes again as follows:—

The Ed., Comm. Pinner, Middlesex.  
Sir,

Your reply to the criticism made by myself, and others, of your attitude towards Trade Unions, is, to my mind, not quite logical, bearing in mind the fact that it is repeatedly stated in the "S.S." that strikes are of no avail.

The workers, even in their Unions, have only one weapon which is feared by their bosses. That weapon is the power of withholding their labour. As you have repeatedly asserted, the result of such action is not of lasting benefit to the workers. The so-called General Strike of 1926 might be cited as proof of this.

However, my criticism was not against the Unions as such (futile though I consider they are as, after all, the boss only throws them a few crumbs when it suits him to do so), as against the leaders of the Unions. To my mind it is almost impossible to convince the worker that the only way to abolish poverty is by replacing the present social system by Socialism, so long as he is spoon-fed, as he is to-day, by his present Trade Union leaders. The trouble is that most of these leaders pose as being Socialists; in fact, some of them definitely say that they are Socialists. "Are we not, they say, out to Nationalise the Banks, Mines, Railways, etc.?" "We want a shorter working day or week, with higher wages, old age pensions at 50," and all the rest of the bag of tricks. He tells his members that this is Socialism and, unfortunately, his members believe him and pat him on the back for the splendid fellow he is.

It is these mountebanks who stand between us and the workers when we attempt to point out the evils of Capitalism and the only cure for them. In my opinion Socialists should not necessarily be members of their Trade Union, and that for two very important reasons. First of all, because they are, when members of a Union, assisting the Capitalist class through the Trade Union leaders to keep the masses in subjection. The Transport Workers' Union leaders are a good example of this. Secondly, Trade Unions are only out for reforms just as is the Labour Party, to which most, if not all, the leaders belong. It is, therefore, just as logical to join the Labour Party as to join a Trade Union, so far as Socialists are concerned.

Yours fraternally,  
W. T. H. RAYNOR.

### Reply.

Early in his letter Mr. Raynor says that our reply to his first letter was "not quite logical, bearing in mind the fact that it is repeatedly stated in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD that strikes are of no avail." Mr. Raynor has misunderstood our position. We do not say that strikes are of no avail, but that they are of no avail to end the exploitation of the workers and achieve Socialism—a very different matter. Strikes are often of avail to secure increases of pay or resist decreases, within the limits set by the condition of trade, unemployment, etc., at a given moment. More than that, trade unions are centres of resistance which enable the workers to prevent some at least of the intimidation of individuals which would otherwise take place. They serve these functions mainly, but not entirely, by means of strikes and the threat of strikes. The

mere fact that there is an organised body in existence helps to strengthen the workers' resistance and to give the employers pause when they are contemplating aggressive action.

Whether the 1926 strike achieved any purpose or not, does not disprove our case, for we do not argue that *all* strikes are wise or opportune.

Mr. Raynor then goes on to say that his criticism was not against the unions as such but against the leaders. The leaders, he says, spoon-feed the members, and this makes it impossible to convince the latter that the only way to abolish poverty is by Socialism. There is a certain justification for this view, but actually it obscures the real position. That the workers are in the main non-Socialist is not due to the trade union officials but to the capitalist education and propaganda which surrounds the worker all his life. Mr. Raynor puts the cart before the horse. It is the non-Socialist outlook of the workers, and their misconceptions about Socialism, which lead the leaders to adopt, and to flourish on, non-Socialist actions thinly veiled in Socialist phrases. But if there were no trade unions or trade union leaders the workers would be essentially the same as they are, except that some Hitler or Mosley or Stalin or Mussolini would be spoon-feeding them instead, and using much the same Socialist phrases as are used at present.

All of which brings us back to the main case of the S.P.G.B., that, until the workers have been convinced of the truth of Socialism, and have understood its principles, they will continue to be political sheep. Only our Socialist propaganda, multiplied a hundredfold, will rid them of their illusions. Leaving the trade unions will not help—indeed, it may often introduce another confusing factor, the charge that the Socialist is anti-trade union. The unions are useful, and the workers, although non-Socialist, know this. Our Socialist propaganda, which includes propaganda against all leadership as such, will help to make the unions more effective without in any way detracting from its usefulness for the objective—Socialism.

One last point which calls for comment is the statement that the unions "are only out for reforms just as is the Labour Party." The reason for the existence of trade unions, and the chief work they do, is not striving for political and social reforms, but dealing with wages and conditions of work. The other activities carried on by some (not all) unions are not the purpose which calls them into being and keeps them alive, and are not the reason why Socialists support trade unionism. The Labour Party exists to secure reforms through influencing the Government or through being the Government. It therefore stands in the way of the conquest of power by an organised Socialist majority for the purpose of achieving Socialism. ED. COMM.

## Answers to Correspondents

Mr. N. H. Devall.—Thanks for the views and suggestions. We have noted them. ED. COMM.

Mr. J. Cohen (Burdett Road).—See reply to another correspondent concerning trade unions in this issue. As we have explained before, we do not see the analogy between belonging to a trade union and helping the capitalists to enforce their laws. ED. COMM.

C. C. H. (Victoria, B.C., Canada).—Regret delay in answering query about "Collapse of Capitalism." See elsewhere in this issue. ED. COMM.

### The Collapse of Capitalism

A correspondent (C. C. H.), writing from Victoria, British Columbia, asks us to explain the use of the title, "Why Capitalism will not Collapse," for the pamphlet sold by the S.P.G.B. He says that if capitalism will not collapse "what becomes of the birth, growth and decay of systems? Is this formula to be disregarded in conjunction with capitalism?"

The doubt in our correspondent's mind only arises from his interpretation of the term "collapse." One of the principal objects of the pamphlet was to show the falsity of a notion at one time popular among Communists that capitalism, quite irrespective of any organised efforts of the workers, would come to a sudden cataclysmic collapse. Rejecting that wrong view does not mean that the S.P.G.B. questions the Marxian view that the growing antagonisms of capitalism, and the consequent growth of Socialist knowledge and organisation, will lead to the conquest of political power and the abolition of capitalism. The pamphlet makes this quite clear. It also shows why this view is incompatible with the notion of an automatic physical collapse of capitalism. ED. COMM.

### Other Correspondence

Replies to several correspondents have been crowded out by pressure on space. They will appear in subsequent issues. ED. COMM.

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### CENTRAL LONDON

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## "Labour's Way with the Commonwealth."

(Labour Shows the Way Series) Methuen, 2s. 6d.  
BY GEORGE LANSBURY.

THERE are difficulties in criticising Mr. Lansbury's writing. He writes in the first person and what he says could, in some instances, perhaps, be disclaimed by the official Labour Party.

The book under review, though it bears Mr. Lansbury's name as author, has been written in collaboration with Raymond Postgate, Major Graham Pole and C. R. Buxton—the last-named alone wrote the chapter on the Colonies. The preface is characteristically Lansbury (so much so that the rest of the book appears to be mainly the work of the collaborators) and bristles with Biblical phraseology. He sees things "as in a vision" . . . "the Kingdom of Heaven is within us" . . . "the rich young man went away sorrowful" . . . "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul." Nice sentiments, of course, but very irritating to the reader looking for the facts and details of Labour Party policy.

Instead of details there are broad generalisations. The Labour Party believes in emigration, not pre-war emigration, but a new kind, the details and differences of which are left unstated. On Colonial policy there is similar vagueness and confusion of ideas. To quote from page 95: "What is it, then, that makes Labour policy distinctive? First of all, it is that Labour is alive to the historical fact of the part played by capitalist exploitation in the growth of the British Empire, and is determined to resist that capitalist exploitation to the utmost in the future . . . A Labour Government will, therefore, make no compromise with policies which aim at accelerating the economic development of backward areas by methods which undermine the independence, the social institutions and the morale of their inhabitants, and which thus are injurious to both of them."

Despite this the reader is told on page 93 that the Labour Party "realises clearly that to go back on the past is impossible, that to disturb the structure unduly might cause far more harm than good to the people for whose welfare we are responsible." There you have it both ways. The Labour Party are "determined to resist capitalist exploitation," but the "structure" must not be "unduly disturbed."

It looks as though the next Labour Government, like the last, will introduce a policy of "continuity." Disappointment is in store for natives in the Crown Colonies and mandated territories who are expecting much from them. H. W.



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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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*While the  
world is . . .  
made up of  
rich idlers  
and poor . .  
workers . . .  
there cannot  
be peace . .  
upon earth.*

## The King's Question Answered

### SLUMS AND LUXURY LINERS

**A**FTER some caustic remarks about the Glasgow slums, King Edward VIII, on his recent visit to the new wonder liner, "Queen Mary," turned to a member of his party and said, "How do you reconcile a world that has produced this mighty ship with the slums that we have visited?" Lord Melchett, who reports this (*Daily Telegraph*, March 12th) does not say what answer, if any, was given to the King's question, nor does his own toying with it throw any light on what to him is evidently the unsolved mystery of our age. Lord Melchett, faced with a problem which can only be solved by a complete *change*, a social revolution, could only recoil from such a notion and proffer its opposite, "The only inkling

I can give you in regard to its solution may be summed up in one word — equilibrium. . . . We have got to produce things in a balanced way, and in relation to all other things of which the community has need."

Here Lord Melchett just touched the fringe of the problem, but without having even an inkling of what is under

his nose. There is no such thing as "the community," and its "needs" are, therefore, an abstraction that has no meaning. We live in a world which consists of two communities, those who own and control the means of producing and distributing wealth—the capitalists—and those who, not having property on the income from which they can live, have to work for wages or salaries. Lord Melchett is so accustomed to viewing the monetary aspect of things that he cannot be expected, without assistance, to see below the surface. Let us, then, assist him by pointing out that the wages system, which looks so natural and inevitable when viewed from above, is purely capitalistic and will pass with capitalism. It disguises a conflict of interests, an exploitation of one class by another, every whit as callous as chattel slavery. The chattel slave produces wealth for the slave-owner, but must, of course, be provided with the necessities of life. The wage- and salary-earners, making up the great majority of the population, produce wealth for the capitalists, the owners of the means of production and distribution. In return the workers receive, when they are at work, the price of the commodity they sell, their labour-power. If their standard of living is sometimes above the chattel slave level they suffer the torments of insecurity unknown to the latter.

Now let us examine Lord Melchett's phrase, "Things of which the community has need." A glance is sufficient to show its absurdity. The community of the rich needs good and abundant food, roomy, luxurious and well-situated houses, expensive cars, and foreign travel in luxury liners. The community of the rich, having property rights in all the wealth produced by the workers, and having to

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return only a part for their upkeep, not only wants these things, but can pay for them, and has them. It is their privileged position, their ability to pay for whatever they want which determines how the world's resources shall be used.

On the other hand, the workers also want these things, but cannot pay for them and, therefore, do not get them. The workers lack what the economists call "effective demand." They get slums, poor and inadequate food, shoddy clothing and ineffective advice from Lord Melchett.

In face of these two worlds, the world of the rich and the world of the poor, talk of equilibrium gets us nowhere. Producing more and better food, so far from improving the state of things, would actually increase the disequilibrium Lord Melchett has in mind, for the workers could not buy it, and the capitalists already buy all they need. Like a bumper crop, or a big increase in productivity in any industry, any such increase of food production would merely throw out of work thousands of the workers in the food trades, because the owners could not sell the increase at profitable prices.

What, then, is the remedy? It is so plain and reasonable that the slowness of the workers to accept it is a matter for recurring amazement. Abolish the capitalist ownership and control of the means of production and distribution. Rid society of this institution which has now become a fetter for the mass of the population. Let society itself, through its own democratic control, utilise the land to produce food for the needs of the whole community, and the factories and railways, etc., likewise. Let us have our means of life turned into means of producing the requirements of humanity, not the profits of a class. Let us turn our two hostile communities into one real community, freed for ever of the rivalry of interests between those who own and those who do not own, a rivalry which restricts the production of useful and beautiful things, condemns vast masses to sordid poverty, excites class hatred and international war, and poisons human relationships in a war of the jungle instead of a co-operative endeavour to enrich life.

H.

## Soviet Capitalism

"Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?" by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. 2 vols. 1174 pp. (Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd. 35/-.)

THE present writer is unable to join in the chorus of flattering praise that has heralded the appearance of the above volumes. The title of the work is misleading. Even Stalin has not yet had the impudence to declare that Communism, as a system of society, has been established in Russia. The plan of the book is bad. The second volume goes over the same ground as the first from an angle which, though slightly different, does nothing to improve the perspective. Finally, the contents show a complete lack of any sense of the relative importance of the various aspects of the subject. For sheer question-begging assumption, tedious repetition and the wholesale sacrifice of inner understanding to formal description it will be hard to beat. A fascinating and important subject of widespread interest has been subjected to the typically superficial treatment one has learnt to expect from the Fabians, with the result that instead of enlightenment all one gets is a headache.

The authors ask us to contemplate an economic and historical miracle. They profess to depict a society which has liquidated capitalism without first developing, in anything approaching fullness, the productive forces which that system calls into being. We are expected to believe that in Russia there is a large and growing class of wage-receivers without a corresponding class of wage-payers, that profits are made, but that no one

makes profit, that capital is accumulating at an unusually rapid pace, but that no one owns it, and that while no one dictates, the workers and peasants are, none the less, most effectively dictated to. The present scribe remains incredulous.

The Webbs occupy over four hundred pages describing the formal relations which are supposed to exist between the elements of the constitution, such as the Soviets, the trade unions, the handicraft co-operatives, the collective farms, consumers' co-ops., and the Communist Party. In their entirety these are organised into a "pyramidal hierarchy" (the authors' expression) at the summit of which stands the Council of People's Commissars, consisting entirely of Communists. At the base of the pyramid, however, in the soviets of the cities and villages (the only directly elected bodies) the Communists are in a decided minority. The collective farmers are not *as such* represented, although they and their dependants form, roughly, half the population, while the Communist Party is "outside," (or should it not be *above*) "the law and the constitution" (p. 430).

This arrangement, ascribed to the genius of Lenin, is called by the Webbs, "multiform democracy."

After having patiently waded through the above-mentioned four hundred pages, the reader is confronted by the confession of the authors that the constitutional structure changes so rapidly

as to be difficult to define (p. 418). A further thirty pages have then to be traversed to discover whether or not the government can correctly be described as a dictatorship. The Webbs decide not, but the fact that no organised opposition to the government is tolerated is not even mentioned. Not until we reach page 586 do we encounter the significant statement, quoted approvingly from the work of an American engineer, that "Without the G.P.U. there would be no Communist Party in Russia to-day, no Union of Socialist Soviet Republics."

In other words, the secret political police, one of the worst features of Tsarism (marked down for abolition by the pre-war Bolsheviks when they were still advocating a democratic republic), is the chief prop of their present rule. The supremacy of the Communist Party is based, as they have so often told us, not upon the consciously organised majority of the population, but upon an instrument of terror designed to protect them, at once from the plots of ambitious rivals and the revolts of the discontented.

This survival of semi-mediaeval methods of government requires to be explained, and it is characteristic of the Webbs that they have given us the very minimum of historical background. They devote so much space to the details of the superstructure that, in spite of the size of the volume, they skip over important points with mere passing references. Thus, if one wants information concerning "the liquidation of the capitalist," one finds two or three isolated pages, in the course of which one learns that although "Lenin would have waded through seas of blood" to achieve this object (p. 535), it actually occurred "very largely by accident" (p. 612) owing to the need for evading, if possible, certain stipulations by the German Government with regard to the execution of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. We are given the bare information that on or about June 28th, 1918, "a decree was issued declaring all enterprises having a capital exceeding 200,000 roubles to be the property of R.S.F.S.R." There is nothing concerning the extent to which this capital was previously in the possession of foreigners, nor how the decree affected Russian holders. Neither are we told how the lesser concerns came to be nationalised. For information of this description one is obliged to go to less pretentious volumes such as "Economic Trends in Soviet Russia," by A. Yugov, or Mr. M. Dobbs' "Russian Economic Development."

Apparently the Webbs have never heard of the huge new Russian National Debt, though government bonds are occasionally referred to. The subject of taxation is dismissed in a few sentences. For some obscure reason the State taxes its own industries, though "the assessment is mitigated in various ways, in favour of the

collectivised concerns," whatever that may mean (p. 117). One gathers, however, that though the workers get about two hundred roubles per month on the average, some people make up to 24,000 roubles in the same period. Even when their income tax is paid they are many times better off than the skilled worker. According to the "U.S.S.R. Handbook" (Gollancz, 1936, p. 310), the tax on higher incomes has been reduced since the Webb's book was published.

How are wages determined? "According to social value," reply the authors (p. 186), which turns out upon examination to be nothing more than a new name for our old friends, supply and demand, or in other words the relative scarcity of certain grades of skill. Devotion to the piece-work system of payment is transformed in these pages into a "socialistic" virtue, taking the place of profit as a lever for achieving industrial progress. The accident rate is not mentioned, but, apparently, even American mechanics, accustomed to the driving methods of Ford's factory at Detroit, have been compelled to protest against piece-work in the tool-room (p. 709).

The Trade Unions bit the dust about six years ago as independent defenders of wage-rates (pp. 170-2), and have been saving the government the expense of a separate department for administering sick-pay, etc., since 1933. The soviet trade union "is not formed to fight anybody, and has no inducement to prevent the competition among workmen for particular jobs" (p. 173). Its chief concern apparently is now the speeding up of production. Trade Union officials act as rate-fixers (p. 188), and help to keep the wheels of industry working smoothly by discouraging strikes. Communists in other countries have called this sort of thing by hard names, but Russia has become, in a more sinister sense than ever before, the land of holy idol worship.

The rank and file of the Communist Party play a similar role. Forty per cent. of the membership are salaried officials (p. 352). The rest see in their skill at leading non-members in increasing production, the high road to promotion. Even the very cows on the State farms recognise the touch of their authority, yielding five litres of milk to them as against four to non-members (p. 361). Can it be that they have replaced the old peasant milking songs with a chant of the theses of the Third International? Of their loyalty there can be no question, however; they do not even ask their leaders to issue a balance sheet for the 50 million roubles which is subscribed annually as membership fees (p. 371).

The State Trusts and Combines controlling the various large-scale industrial establishments (compulsorily amalgamated during the period of civil war) are not departments like the Post Office (or the Railways in certain countries), but



rather, bodies comparable to the United States Steel Corporation or the Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., with their respective boards or commissions of directors appointed by the People's Commissar in each case (p. 110). They in turn appoint the general managers of the separate factories or plants. Management by committees elected by the workers in the factories established by decree in November, 1917, was definitely deposed by a decree of June 28th, 1918, placing each enterprise under the control of a single manager (pp. 604-9).

This triumph of bureaucracy over a mild form of anarchy naturally pleases the Webbs, but they fail to point out that the entire situation demonstrated the absence of any organised working-class ready to establish Socialism by democratic methods. In spite of formal trustification, however, we are told on p. 772 that "thousands of separate employers are actively competing with each other in their search for this or that kind of skilled worker, whilst each is habitually struggling against all the rest for an adequate supply of unskilled and even raw peasant labour." In view of this fact, the forcible collectivisation of two-thirds of the peasantry, involving as it did the expropriation of hundreds of thousands, takes on a new light. The dispossession of peasants is the historical capitalist method of increasing the supply of labour-power for industry.

"Each enterprise is responsible for all new and additional capital invested in its undertakings, and for the actual repayment of loans and the payment of bank interest, with a system of accounting of great strictness and complexity" (p. 781). In spite of this, however, Molotov, President of the Council of Commissars (p. 782), complains that "we have cases in which those who direct trusts, co-operative organisations, factories, or soviet farms, sell their produce more profitably, upsetting the fixed prices, and fail to meet their obligations to the State, taking in reality the unclean path of speculation." Thus, in a land where scarcity, not over-production, is the rule, control from above fails to prevent the assertion of economic laws which enable individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the State in whose service they are nominally engaged. Curiously enough, the Webbs do not give any examples of these people being shot by the G.P.U. "Counter-revolutionaries" appear to be drawn mainly from the lower official ranks, the so-called technical intelligentsia. And even clerks and shop assistants, foremen and stationmasters, train conductors and book-keepers fail to acquire "soviet incentives." Indeed, the Webbs saddle this section with responsibility for the fact that in the U.S.S.R. "the project or plan is always superior to the execution of it" (p. 798).

Where these people are exceptionally scarce,

such as experienced engineers, some curious incidents occur. Thus the Webbs found in "the best room in the best hotel in an important city, a Russian specialist who had been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for counter-revolutionary activities. He had served only a small part of his sentence when the president of the trust for which he had worked, feeling severely the loss of this expert service, obtained the favour of his release" (p. 582). They also quote a case (given by Ella Winter in "Red Virtue" p. 76), in which "Four men in a civil aviation factory were arrested for wrecking. They were given ten-year sentences. A year later they were all amnestied, given 10,000 rouble bonuses for good work done, and sent back to work without a stigma" (p. 583). Seemingly, it pays in Russia not to be a mere Kulak or other recalcitrant.

In the sphere of distribution, shops run by the trusts vie with shops run by the State directly on the one hand, and the co-operative stores on the other. Of the latter we are told (p. 326) that "There have been more speculators and embezzlers, thieves and bureaucrats in the co-operative system than any other branch of soviet enterprise"; evidently there is still a fair amount of scope in Russia for primitive accumulation. One cannot help wondering if those who get away with it invest in government bonds. Municipal pawnshops come to the rescue of those who cannot make ends meet in this way (p. 331), but stay, we have omitted to mention that the situation is likely to be relieved some time this year, by "the opening of 'one-price stores' after the model of the Woolworth establishments in the American and western European cities" (p. 330). Now let who will declare that the Soviet Government is not looking after the interests of the workers!

The struggle between the peasantry and the government has been practically incessant. The latter appear to have won, with the approval of the Webbs. The peasants, generally, are far too poor to purchase the expensive modern types of agricultural machinery now being produced; nor is the government now in the position to give them away. The plan, therefore, has followed the line of establishing machine and tractor stations for the purpose of ploughing the land of the collective farms, and threshing the crop in return for a proportion of the yield. This proportion has been the basis of dispute, in addition to the general distrust of the government's methods. So the authors tell us that "What the Soviet Government was faced with from 1929 onward was, in fact, not a famine, but a widespread 'general strike' of the peasantry, in resistance to the policy of collectivisation" (p. 265). One expression of this "strike" was the destruction of livestock, which was reduced from 270 million head in 1929 to 118 million in 1933, i.e., to less

than half. The reply of the government was wholesale deportation. By the hundred thousand the "recalcitrant" peasants were removed from the villages and put to work on roads, railways and canals, cutting timber or mining ores. Defending this action, the Webbs contend that as the soil was national property, the peasants were merely occupants who were under an obligation "to produce the foodstuffs required for the maintenance of the community" (p. 268). Was this what Lenin meant when he broadcast the slogan, "The land for the peasants"?

It is interesting to reflect that when it was pointed out in these columns, in the early days of the Soviet régime, that the peasantry were unlikely to take the Webbs' views of their duties, we were derided by the British champions of the Bolsheviks, who imagined in their simplicity that the Russian mujik would have no difficulty in understanding the principles of Socialism.

Forming three-quarters of the population, the peasantry has no more political power than is represented by the village meeting (p. 22). Legally, the village soviet has wide powers compared with an English parish council, according to the Webbs; but they appear to have overlooked that the poverty of the peasantry is an effective barrier to any attempt on their part to use these powers. Thus the government has to prod the local councils into action rather than to check their extravagance.

It is from the peasantry that the Red Army is mainly recruited by compulsory service. We are told, however, that "many who are not conscripted actually volunteer for service. They find the army conditions, in fact, superior to those of the independent peasant or the miner, the factory-operative or the worker on the oil-field" (p. 125). How reminiscent of capitalism elsewhere! A further attraction appears to be that "The peasant who is serving in the army can always command a hearing. Many are the instances in which a son who is a Red Army man has been able, by intervening from a distance, to obtain redress for his father and family who have been suffering from some petty tyranny or injustice at the hands of a local official." What happens to those who are not fortunate enough to have a son in the army?

The Russian authorities have for centuries preferred to deal with the peasantry collectively. Taxation in any form is thus easier to raise. The Bolsheviks, however, have a further motive. The fall of the Romanovs is a standing warning to them not to rely upon an antiquated agriculture for food supplies, especially in war-time. The same remark applies to their whole policy of planning. The Webbs admit this on pp. 637-8. "Every government has to plan for national defence. But to the Soviet Government the danger of war has hitherto been a constant pre-occupation. . . . This fear has from the first lent a strategic

object to the planning. It has seemed of vital importance that . . . the U.S.S.R. should make itself substantially independent of the outer world, not only in all the means of waging modern warfare, but also in all indispensable commodities. Hence the exceptional concentration of the First Five-year Plan . . . on a rapid expansion of the "heavy industries," by means of which things can be made, or troops transported, instead of seeking directly to increase the making of the household commodities desired by the people." So this is Socialism!

The new civilisation looks remarkably like the one we are all too well acquainted with. Even the extensive State control is in no sense new for Russia. Towards the latter end of the last century "The government was not only by far the largest landowner in Russia, it was by far the greatest capitalist and the greatest employer of labour. Its railways, its mines, its factories of many different kinds, were in every part of the country" ("Economic History of Russia," James Mavor, vol. 2, p. 152, J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.). Going still further back the same author tells us, "When Peter (the Great) came to the throne there were no large factories in Russia; when he died there were 233 State and private factories and foundries. These establishments were either founded by the State and managed by the State officials, or they were subsidised by the State, and afterwards were handed over to private firms. Throughout the 18th century, the great industries in Russia were carried on primarily for the benefit of the State" ("Economic History of Russia," vol. 1, pp. 124, 535).

What is the difference between the "Socialism" of Stalin and that of Peter? Simply this, that the latter's undertakings were manned by serf-labour; the former's are based on the exploitation of wage-slaves.

Peter, however, had not heard of Marx, and could not try to cover up his proceedings with a display of "proletarian" phraseology.

Is this to say that no progress is made? By no means. The break-up of mediæval forms in Russia, as elsewhere, is rendered inevitable by the advance of capitalistic methods of production. That Russia has had a spell of Bolshevik rule is no more surprising than that Britain and other countries should have occasional Labour Governments.

The administration of capitalism by people who have sprung from the working class is not Socialism. It does but demonstrate that within their servitude the workers are developing in the direction of political maturity.

Contemporary conditions in Russia have given a curious twist to the ideas of Marx and Engels, just as conditions in Germany in the first half of the 19th century gave a similar twist to revolu-



tionary ideas from France. The stability of the existing régime in Russia cannot be eternal, and it behoves workers to beware of accepting the assurances of "intellectuals," like the Webbs, concerning Russia or Socialism. They are authorities on neither. E. B.

In a note to the Editorial Committee of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, with respect to the review copy, Mr. S. Webb writes:—

"You may say, if you like, the arrangements might possibly be made presently for a 'limited' edition at the same price (5s.), strictly confined to members of such organisations [of workers as were allowed to have the original 5s. edition], if their executive committees wish to take the matter up, and that, accordingly, anyone wishing to take advantage of such an arrangement should write to his E.C. on the subject."

## The United Front

ONCE again the question of the United Front has cropped up, and in the current issue of the *Labour Monthly* there is a series of articles devoted to this subject. Firstly, let us examine the article by John Lewis, late Labour candidate for Great Yarmouth. He is discussing the possible basis of unity with the Communist Party and writes: "... all it (the Labour Party) can do is to lay down the minimum condition for real unity, which should be: 1, Abandonment of the revolutionary method and acceptance of Parliamentary transition to Socialism; 2, Acceptance of the Socialist programme embodied in 'For Socialism and Peace'."

The first condition is too ambiguous to discuss here, but we will deal with the second. According to the official programme of the Labour Party in "For Socialism and Peace," under Socialism we are still going to have buying and selling, wages and rents, employers and employees. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," and a more highly-organised Capitalism, run by the Labour Party, under the guise of Socialism, would certainly not abolish the problems of the working-class, but, on the contrary, would aggravate them. John Lewis continues: "We must fasten on proposals which are urgent, have a wide, humane appeal, and which, if carried out, will force us to go on and make retreat impossible. . . . This programme should be based on two fundamental principles:—

"1. That the provision of a national minimum of food, clothing and shelter is desirable and possible.

"2. That it cannot be impossible to set idle men to work on unused resources to make the things they need. This was the programme on which I fought the General Election at Yarmouth. We had a united front of Radicals, Lloyd Georgites, Labour, I.L.P., and C.P." (Our italics.) There is certainly no reason why they should not have had the support of the National Government on such a brilliant "fundamental" programme!

Next comes an article by D. W. Flanagan, Editor of the *Rotherhithe Labour News*. He writes:

"Our view is that the only alternative to Baldwin is Socialism." Our view is that the only alternative to Capitalism is Socialism. Capitalism can be carried on just as well (or, rather, ill) whether Baldwin, Lloyd George, or Attlee, a National Government or a Labour Government, is at the helm. Mr. Flanagan continues: "Next we find that our arguments had not taken us far enough. We needed a programme of action. And this is roughly the Rotherhithe plan, which was first published in the *Rotherhithe Labour News* for January, 1936:—

"The Labour Party local organisations throughout the country should initiate a united campaign as broad and representative as possible, to press for:

"Repeal of all anti-working class and anti-Trade Union legislation.

"The granting of 2s. per shift increase to the miners.

"The end of the Means Test and the Hitler model labour camps.

"Work or maintenance for the unemployed.

"A peace pact with the Soviet Union and the French nation.

"The end of the Naval Treaty with Hitler.

"The imposition of oil sanctions against Mussolini in order to speed the downfall of Fascism."

So this is the "revolutionary" programme of action that is going to rally the workers for the purpose of expropriating the most experienced and the most cunning ruling class the world has ever seen!

Is the S.P.G.B. opposed to working-class unity?

On the contrary, the basis of our position is that Socialism will only be established when a majority of the working class unite for that purpose. But that unity must have a sound foundation, based on Socialist principles. Our main objection to a union of non-Socialist organisations is expressed by Mr. H. Bennett, late Labour candidate for Dover. He first of all stresses the non-Socialist character of the Labour Party. "I am assuming that we are considering this particular election as *Socialists* (his italics), as distinct from members (and/or candidates of the Labour Party, *a very different thing*) (our italics). . . . Suppose we decide to 'trim our

sails' and go out for votes and, further, let us assume we get them, where are we then? Would anyone suggest *any* party could proceed on such a basis to introduce Socialist measures?"

Precisely; if you fight an election on a programme of reforms, you will get votes, not from workers who desire the abolition of capitalism, but from those who still think that their economic problems can be solved within capitalism. If these reforms are put into operation, capitalism will still continue and the workers will still be wage-slaves. If, on the other hand, the reforms are not effected, then these people will turn in disappointment from

the United Front and become excellent material for the mob oratory and the even more specious promises of the Hitlers and Mussolinis.

Once again we repeat the classic slogan, "Workers of the world, unite!" But with the understanding that they must unite, not for "work or maintenance," or the "imposition of sanctions," not for "London Transport Boards" or "Central Electricity Boards," but for the purpose of stripping the capitalist class of its ownership of the means of production and distribution, making these common property, and thus establishing a classless society.

G. H. A.

## Morrison's Child

WE Socialists are out for the common ownership and democratic control of the means of life, by, and in the interest of, the whole people. This is to be brought about by the education of the workers in Socialist principles, to the end that the workers will organise with us to capture the political machinery, and so be in a position to control the armed forces, and thus be able to dictate terms to the capitalist class. When we tell people this we are by many called dreamers, or told that such a proposal is too far-fetched, or too far off.

We are told that a more "reasonable" way, and one getting "better" results, is to lay such an object aside and go in for "something now," and so gradually "build up" Socialism. This is a favourite method of the Labour Party, the I.L.P. and many ex-Liberals. They say that industry is to be gradually taken over and the owners compensated or given a guaranteed dividend, and their previously competing concerns amalgamated and run as a public utility corporation, responsible to nobody but themselves. This, we are told, is achieving "Socialism in our time." Let us see how this pans out from the people's point of view.

Some little time ago the various transport undertakings within 25 miles of London were absorbed into what is now known as London Passenger Transport Board, and a certain Mr. Morrison, Chairman of the L.C.C., played quite a part in "welding up" this concern, so much so that it is often referred to as "Morrison's Child." The scheme was initiated by the last Labour Government. Since it has been in actual operation, time and again the workers' conditions have been tightened up. Frequent stoppages have taken place on Green Line, trams, 'buses and trolley-buses, so it may be taken for granted that the labour conditions are not all they might be. But for the owners, "the Board," what a difference: No com-

petition, no fare cuts, no "redundant" services now. Let the public wait and travel when and how *we* like; all fares now come in to us, and our income is more secure than before. That is how two out of the three parties stand.

Now for how the "customers," the public, are served.

There is no need to labour this point to Londoners. They all well know the morning and evening scrambles, and queueing up, and the delays in the centre through volume of traffic, and delays in the suburbs through depletion of services. A writer in *Reynolds's* (February 6th, 1936) gives details as to where the services have been cut down and "re-organised" since the amalgamations. He went to Broadway House for some explanations. He got them. This is what "the Board's spokesman" told him:—

"Our first duty, imposed by Parliament, is to our shareholders."

"To achieve the necessary financial results, we want to make sure that every train, tram and 'bus is filled as nearly as possible. Our idea is that there should be no empty seats. We want paying loads only."

So that accounts for the delays and scrambles. Wait till they get a "paying" (profitable) load. As for your "getting there," well, when *we* are ready, and don't forget "our first duty is to our shareholders," the capitalists, the owners.

That is a bit of Herbert Morrison's "Socialism in the making," and 'twere best left alone. The position is much the same with the Electricity Board and the Grid.

It is quite futile to waste time on such reforms and the parties which sponsor them. Organising for straight revolutionary Socialism alone is worth while for the working class, and to this end we ask you to join us.

C. V. R.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

APRIL,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## The "Haves" and "Have-Nots"

**R**EFERENCES to the "Haves" and "Have-Nots" have suddenly sprung into prominence during the past 12 months, and all sorts of people are demanding that an international conference be called to remove this cause of world unrest immediately. As Socialists have used the same phrases for upwards of half a century at least, we should be glad that we have been heard at last. It turns out, however, that it isn't our problem they are worrying about, but the problem of the older and fatter bandits again, in their relationship to the lean and hungry ones. Poor Germany and Poland and Japan and Italy have no colonies, or none to speak of, while England, France, Holland, Belgium and Portugal are glutted. So Mr. Lansbury, in the House of Commons on February 5th moved a resolution which asked that a new international conference be called owing to the widespread preparations for war.

To deal with the economic factors which are responsible, such as the necessity for access to raw materials and to markets and for the migration of peoples, with a view to arriving at an international agreement which will remove from the nations the incentive to pile up armaments and establish the peace of the world on a sure foundation.—(*Times*, February 6th.)

The intention behind the resolution may be good and it is conceivable that international negotiations between the capitalist powers behind which

would be the threat of war, might secure some transfers of territory or access to markets without an actual outbreak of war on a large scale. Nevertheless, the scheme itself is a hopeless one from the point of view of removing friction and world unrest. It is capitalism itself which breeds rivalries and hatreds at home and abroad, not the fact that some countries have much and the others no colonial territory. The problem of finding markets is the same in little as in large countries, and the solution is not to be sought abroad at Geneva, but at home in London, Paris, Tokio and New York.

Are we opposed to the have-nots entering into possession? By no means. On the contrary, it is only the Socialists who are in favour of it, while all the Powers which shed tears of self-pity about their wrongs are as firmly opposed to it as the big colonial Powers. The have-nots who must take over are the dispossessed masses of all countries. Having done so the world will no more be troubled by the ambitions, hatreds and war-threats of the capitalists and their military machines.

Mr. Lansbury wants "poor" Germany and Italy to have "access to raw materials." Great Britain has such access already, and Germany had it before 1914, but the British and German workers had not and have not. British workers have no more right to work the raw materials in British territories than German workers have. The cultivable territory and all the mineral wealth underground is owned and controlled by the capitalists and their Governments.

In short, Mr. Lansbury's proposal is to redistribute the loot among the world's brigands. Our proposal is to end the brigandage, that is capitalism, at home and abroad.

## No Class-Struggle Here

**I**N the autumn of 1935 many illustrious readers of the *Times* amused themselves by proving that capitalism is a myth. Either there is no such thing at all, or alternatively, all human societies have always been, and always will be, capitalistic. Professor Hearnshaw took up the story in the *Daily Telegraph*, telling us that Socialists have "imagined" the capitalist system. The Economic League and the *Times*, on other occasions, maintain that in England the Socialist conception must be false because they profess not to be able to see a well-defined capitalist class and working class; we are all capitalists, they say, because of the deposits in the Post Office Savings Banks.

That is the story served out as regards this country, but when the same people look at capitalism further afield a remarkable change takes place.

The *Times*, in its Editorial on the Tokyo murders, could not find any explanation of the political movements in Japan, except one based on class interests:—

There is little labour agitation in Japan; but there is a general disillusionment over the result of industrialisation, a disillusionment which is felt most strongly among the agricultural classes, from whom the officers are mainly recruited. Some of the patriotic societies, while fiercely opposed to Communism, demand that profit-making in finance, industry, and trade should be curbed by methods which are practically indistinguishable from Communism. They all resent the contrast between the great fortunes made in business and the poverty and austerity of life which is traditional among the military classes in Japan. —(February 27th.)

So, in abstract discussion, capitalism and capitalists are myths, figments of the Socialist imagination, but in far-away Japan the army movement is led mostly by "younger men drawn from the small landowning class," who resent "the exploitation of the peasantry by financiers and industrialists, with the connivance of corrupt politicians." (*Times*, March 5th.) They object to Japan's Government being controlled by "capitalists, politicians and bureaucrats."

At home in England the *Times* cannot see the poverty and misery wrought by capitalism, but in Japan the Army movement, in the words of the *Times*' own correspondent, is "A protest against the obvious fact that the mass of Japanese remain poor amid the country's vaunted progress, while a few families have amassed colossal fortunes. . ." (*Times*, March 3rd.)

Similarly, Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard*, in its Editorial (February 26th), describes the Japanese

Cabinet as being dependent "on the goodwill of the Minseito Party, and this party, in its turn, dependent on industrial capitalist influences, which are not especially concerned about the Japanese

farmer, and oppose militarism because it arouses prejudices adverse to Japanese foreign trade."

An even more frank reference was made by the *Observer* to the capitalist nature of British control in Shanghai. Their Shanghai correspondent wrote (March 1):

Shanghai is essentially a capitalistic structure designed to protect vested interests.

Perhaps if these various newspapers were to get their Far-Eastern correspondents to take a telescopic view of Great Britain the Editors might begin to understand that early 19th-century England is mirrored in modern capitalistic Japan, and that movements here are to be explained only by the same kind of class-interests as operate there. But then, of course, the proprietors would hardly allow such articles to be printed.

### COMMUNISTS!

The following announcement appeared in the French Communist paper *Humanité* on January 5th:—

A STATEMENT OF THE  
COMMUNIST PARTY OF  
GREECE.

Athens, January 7th.—A delegation of Communists appeared at the Royal Palace. It made a statement to the effect that the Communist Party, which it represented, would co-operate with the functionaries of the régime, since it considered King George II a bulwark against Fascism and against any autocratic régime.

(The translation is taken from the *Workers' Age*, New York, February 1st, which also publishes the French text as it appears in *Humanité*.)

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain  
HOLDS—**

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.**

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



## The War Situation

### FROM THE RHINE TO ABYSSINIA

**K**EEPING up with current affairs has become very largely a question of following the moves in the threatening conflict between the Powers. Hitler, unable to keep his pledges of prosperity for the German workers, shatters the superficial harmony of the concert of Europe with the diversion of sending troops into the Rhine provinces. At once the millions of half-starved wage-slaves of the European continent turn their eyes away from their own problems to gape in admiration or fear at this circus marvel. Hitler qualifies for the rôle of Europe's bogeyman, following the footsteps of Napoleon, Metternich and Kaiser Wilhelm II. The world has indeed moved little since 1914. Busily preparing for war and manoeuvring for position, the politicians are conducting a long-distance mouth-and-pen duel about the sanctity of treaties. Hitler in the one gesture tears up Locarno, and promises solemnly to keep the next treaty. England, Belgium and France—who pledged themselves to disarm under the Versailles Treaty—indignantly condemn Germany for re-arming. Guilty themselves of defaulting on their debts to America, they are horrified at the threat that action against Germany may be followed by default on Germany's foreign debts. Turning from the capitalist Governments to the Labour Parties, there, too, little has altered. Immediately before 1914 and immediately after 1918 the Labour leaders and Labour Parties took solemn oaths against participation in war. How they broke their oaths in 1914 is a matter of common knowledge. How they propose to do it in a future war has not yet been fully realised. If will be by the slim device of distinguishing between a war waged by "Allied Governments" and a war waged by Allied Governments calling themselves all or part of the League of Nations. The Government's "Statement Relating to Defence" recognises (as Mr. Lloyd George recognised in the last war) that re-arming "will require the most careful organisation and the willing co-operation both of the leaders of industry and of Trade Unions if our task is to be successfully accomplished." The assistance asked for will, of course, be forthcoming.

The Government spokesmen in the House of Lords discussed the various problems arising, and Lord Strabolgi (formerly Commander Kenworthy), Labour Peer, hastens to assure the Government that they can count on Labour support in a future war.

The governing majority of the Labour Party were prepared to support this country in a war for its defence if it was in harmony with our obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations. Since 1914 there had been a tremendous change in the country.

They had now a great labour political movement. Unless they carried that labour political and industrial movement with them they could not get the united nation one would hope for in the case of some terrible emergency in the future. They would only get that if they tried to build up the system of collective security and if the defensive preparations were based on providing the means for this nation to play its part as one State-member of the League of Nations.—(*Times*, February 28th.)

The condition mentioned by Lord Strabolgi is that the Government shall try to build up the system of so-called collective security under the League of Nations. The Government, naturally, has no intention of declining a condition so innocuous. On March 13th we find Mr. Duff Cooper, M.P., Minister for War, relating in the House of Commons that

So far as we can see into the future, if ever we are involved in a war again on the Continent, under whatever Government it may be, it will be a war according to the policy which now has the support of the vast majority of our people, a war on behalf of and in support of the principles of collective security, that is to say, it will be a war fought with allies, and I hope many allies.—(*Hansard*, March 12th, col. 2356.)

There will be little point in saying at the outbreak of any future war that the Labour Parties have deserted their principles, for their principles now lead straight into wars labelled "League of Nations Wars."

#### What the League did for Abyssinia.

However, the present diplomatic turmoil does not mean war. It may turn out to be the overture to a war in the not very distant future, but the curtain is hardly due to go up yet. Let us, then, turn from the war which isn't yet to the war that is still in progress between Italy and Abyssinia. Everywhere, except in the "news" departments of the *Daily Worker*, *Herald*, and various other journals, the badly-armed Abyssinians have been unable to withstand the overwhelming armaments of the Italians. The Emperor of Abyssinia now speaks with bitterness about the League Powers for failing to give him any material help. The *Times* correspondent in Addis Ababa writes:—

What he considers the disgraceful procrastination of the League in applying the only sanctions which could stop the war—which he has described in interviews with me as financial assistance to the victim of aggression and an embargo against the aggressor on all materials necessary for war—combined with the fact that whenever the League looks like being effective some obstructive measure in the disguise of conciliation is regularly introduced, is beginning to alter His Majesty's outlook. He is becoming slowly an Ethiopian of the old warlike type, eager to get into the fighting and either destroy the Italians or die like a Negus.—(*Times*, March 16th.)

The Emperor's Committee in London appeals to England "Please stop the murder, massacre, and slaughter of the innocent and defenceless people

of Ethiopia by helping them to acquire proper means of defending themselves. . ." (*Manchester Guardian*, March 5th.)

As Socialists we are not concerned with whether Abyssinia should be exploited by the native ruling class or by the Italian capitalists; but we sympathise with the tribesmen hounded into war by the Negus and the Italian conscripts led to death by Mussolini's Government. We would ask the well-meaning supporters of the League and of Sanctions, who, six months ago, helped to mislead the Abyssinians into relying on League and Labour Party

help, what they have to say now? What have they done except prolong the useless slaughter? What, indeed, could they do, unless the British ruling class themselves took or threatened armed action, i.e., war against Italy? Giving new names to war has not altered the capitalist world. The capitalist class set the armed forces in motion only to defend capitalist interests. Those who ignore this fact and imagine that the League is above and beyond the motives of those who control it are misleading the workers and playing into the hands of capitalist war-makers. P. S.

## Notes by the Way

### "The Daily Express" Star Performer

**T**HERE are many good reasons why workers should disregard the politics preached by the *Daily Express*. Now its readers are deprived, too, of what was one of its most entertaining non-political features, the column of guidance from the stars contributed by the "astrologer," Mr. Naylor. Every day (including Sunday, in the *Sunday Express*) he advised readers what the stars foretold for those born on that day and for the whole 1½-million not born on that day. When he missed a day consternation reigned throughout the land—or, so the Editor says. All day long the office was besieged on foot or by 'phone. Hundreds of readers refused to leave their homes in the morning to meet the day's battle without first knowing whether this was a day for an ardent love affair, for buying houses or selling pepper, for avoiding sea-trips, or for bearding the boss for a rise. But even into the astral regions the class-struggle had intruded, so the day's readings often gave separate advice for employers and employed. This advice, on Saturday, February 29th, covered both that day and the next. On Saturday we were told that those born on February 29th, if in the ranks of owners of businesses, "May achieve a successful year financially by hard work. Those in employment, on the other hand, must take extra care not to offend those higher up, who can make difficulties for them." Mr. Naylor has yet to learn that the capitalists do not thrive on their own hard work, but on that of others, and that all workers, not only those born on February 29th, have to take extra care not to offend their employer, because he can always "make difficulties for them." The advice for all readers was sound enough, "Employees, look out for trouble, and give no cause for complaint," though the last sentence "avoid extravagance" was hardly necessary.

The bright spot in the advice for Sunday was "Employees must try to be more assertive." As nine-tenths of the workers do not work on Sunday it is a good day to be assertive, provided, of course,

that they carried out Saturday's instructions of minding their p's and q's. It is a pity we cannot know whether the *Express* staff working on Sunday asserted themselves to Lord Beaverbrook and, if so, with what result.

By coincidence, an article on Japan in the *Sunday Express* next day told us to be amazed at the queerness of that nation because, among other things, they consult astrologers!

\* \* \*

### Poverty is not being Abolished

Ceaseless propaganda goes on—as it has for a century or more—designed to convince the poor that their poverty and the wealth of the rich are alike diminishing. The *Times Literary Supplement*, reviewing a book "Farewell to Poverty," asserts (March 7th) that there has been a "great redistribution of wealth and income . . . in this country since the war," and that capitalism "during the century before the war . . . was successfully spreading abundance." The Economic League publishes leaflets assuring the workers that "small and working-class investors have savings . . . of something like £3,000,000,000 in value."

All of this propaganda is the product of ignorance or deceit.

It may be true that the funds in Savings Banks, Building Societies, etc., etc., total nearly £3,000 millions, but how much is that per head of the millions who own it? And how many of them are workers? The Economic League and the *Times* are silent on this. Mr. Hargreaves Parkinson, of the *Economist*, in his book, "The Small Investor," provides an answer. The people who own this sum constitute "at least 75 per cent. of the total population," and the property they own does not amount to "more than 10 to 14 per cent." of the total national wealth. ("Small Investor," Blackie & Son, Ltd., 1930, p. 109-10.) So we are asked to be impressed by the "equality" of ownership demonstrated by the fact that less than one-quarter



of the population own nearly nine-tenths of the national wealth!

Moreover, neither the League nor the *Times* has ever shown that the owners are wholly or mainly workers. As Mr. Parkinson points out (p. 10), an official inquiry showed that "in any savings bank, four-fifths or more of the total deposits are in one-fifth of the accounts." He goes on to say that in his opinion the relatively wealthy depositors "comprise certain Provident and Charitable Societies, and Clubs, which deposit their accumulated funds with the savings banks; foremen and others in the 'non-commissioned' ranks of industry; the wives of middle-class professional or business men. . . ."

Now Professor G. W. Daniels and Mr. H. Campion, in a paper read to the Manchester Statistical Society on March 11th (see *Manchester Guardian*, March 12th), have examined the present ownership of capital, and compared it with ownership in pre-war days. This is their conclusion:—

... it cannot be said there has been any marked change in the distribution of capital in individual hands in England and Wales during the last 25 years.

The slight extent of the change, and the present enormous inequality, is shown by their conclusion that

In 1924-30 1 per cent. of the persons aged 25 and over in England and Wales owned 60 per cent. of the total capital; in 1911-13 1 per cent. of the persons owned 70 per cent. of the total capital.

In 1924-30 80 per cent. of the total capital and in 1911-13 85 per cent. to 90 per cent. was owned by 5 per cent. of the persons aged 25 and over.

They find also that "there is no evidence that the inequality will grow less marked in the future."

The *Manchester Guardian*, while deploring this inequality, sees in the small change a disproof of the views held by "the cruder Marxists." It may be worth while considering this point on another occasion. Here it is sufficient to say that even if there had been a slight over-statement of views as to concentration of capital it shows the bankruptcy of Liberalism, that it can find no other answer to the appalling facts.

#### "Communist-Patriots"

In 1914 Lenin and his associates coined a name for so-called Socialists who deserted internationalism. They were called "social-patriots." Through ignorance or for pay (e.g., Benito Mussolini) they preached war and nationalism. Many of them were the scum of the working-class movement.

In 1936 Lenin's followers-from-afar are being manoeuvred by Moscow into the same position. The *Daily Worker* of March 9th reports that the French Communist organ *Humanité* has issued an appeal "for a united France for the struggle against Fascism and against war." The appeal ends with the slogan:—

"Long live the Unity of France."

"Long live the International."

"Long live the unity of all peace-loving people."

This is precisely the way the "Social-patriots" phrased their desertion in 1914.

The *Daily Worker* of March 10th shows another aspect of the same "Communist-patriotic" trend. The cartoon presents a group of fearsome-looking Nazis, armed with machine-guns, to represent Germany, surrounded by a group of handsome unarmed workers representing Britain, France and Russia. The pretence that England and France (i.e., the respective Governments) are peaceful and proletarian is precisely the line those Governments themselves will take if and when it comes to a clash. The cartoon might have been taken from the *Daily Mail* any time between 1914 and 1918.

#### Salvation by House-Ownership

One of the gifts of the "practical" men to suffering humanity is the building society movement, preaching salvation of the working man by means of house ownership. Not only the Church and the orthodox political party leaders, but also many of the Trade Union and Labour leaders have backed the movement. Now that more workers than ever before have tasted the joys of crippling mortgage payments, of road charges, repairs, jerry-building, and the impossibility of getting anything like the purchase price in the event of compulsory removal to get work elsewhere, companies building flats to let are busy exposing the snags of house-ownership. Posters on the hoardings irritate the unfortunate owner of a few bricks and a mortgage by reminding him too late that he has fallen for another illusory social reform.

#### A New Kind of "Socialism"

An addition to the numerous misuses of the word Socialism was contained in a *Sunday Express* article on Japan (March 1st).

The aim of a movement was described as "a sort of Fascist dictatorship, combined with 'Imperial Socialism' of a Marxian tinge."

If the Japs try to swallow that awful mixture they will be very sick.

#### Blot On or Blot Out

The *Daily Herald* (February 22nd) had a leader on the pepper speculation, which is called a "blot on the City." It promised that under Labour Government the blot will be erased, and the City's financial morality purified. Nothing could show more plainly the gulf between Labourism and Socialism. Under Socialism, there being no use for financial mechanism, the "City" will not be cleansed, but blotted out. Bankers, stockbrokers and others, now preparing to carve out careers teaching "Socialists" how to run finance, please note.

#### Capitalism does not Feed the Workers

Defenders of capitalism who are so lyrical about the technical achievements of modern industry, might try to explain why, after all these years, even the most elementary needs of the working class remain unsatisfied. Sir John Orr, a leading expert on nutrition, in his "Food, Health and Income" (Macmillan, 2s. 6d.), states that there are 4,500,000 people in this country whose income per head is 10s. a week or less, and whose estimated average expenditure in food is only 4s. a week. Not only must many of these 4,500,000 be definitely undernourished, but millions more have a diet inadequate for perfect health. A completely adequate diet is only obtained by half the population. To raise the whole population to the standard attained by the wealthy 4,500,000 who spend 14s. per head on food each week "would involve increases in consumption . . . of milk, eggs, butter, fruit, vegetables and meat varying from 12 per cent. to 25 per cent."

One of the effects of the inadequate diet of the poor is that boys at Council Schools at age 13 are on an average 2½ inches shorter than boys at Christ's Hospital. At seventeen years of age the difference is nearly 4 inches, and at eighteen the sons of the rich at public schools are nearly 5 inches taller.

#### Will Mussolini hold on to Power?

The following sober estimate of the condition of affairs in Italy is translated from a journal, *La Voce*, circulated illegally in Milan. The translation was published in the *American International Review* (March).

There is always the possibility that we in Italy do not see as clearly as observers abroad. On the other hand, we are in a better position to learn what is the current reaction of the population of the country. A successful war must have the backing of the population. A revolution can only be made by the population of the country. Now while the people of Italy are grumbling here and there, it is untrue that the demands of the war have made them turn against it. As yet, they do not oppose Mussolini's war. They will begin to show opposition with defeat in Africa and privations at home. But though our sympathies are with the Ethiopians, we still doubt that Mussolini will be defeated on the Amhara tableland. In order to be defeated in Africa, Mussolini must be opposed in Europe—by the same powers that rule the roost in Geneva. Now these powers have something more important in mind. Even England, which seems to have much to lose through the Fascist defeat of the Negus Negusti. They are playing a bigger game, and may all of a sudden decide to forgive small misdemeanours. The Hoare-Laval plan was a meaningful feeler. It suggested that London and Mussolini may reach an understanding any time the European (sic) scene dictates it. The sanctions remain to date so much preaching. Does Mussolini's war machine really find it hard to buy coal and oil? No, they who are lyrically vituperous against naughty fascism over the Press table in Geneva continue to supply the Italian Fascist forces with large stores of oil. Let us not be fooled by politicians' "big and small manoeuvres." Our job remains sober, patient education. We, unlike

our Parisian and New York friends, cannot afford to listen to fairy tales.

"When the million and a half soldiers are demobilised at the end of the war"—then Mussolini and his gang will have to pay the fiddler. Thus spake "Soda" who writes encouragement from Rome. There is something to such a promise. Demobilisation always presents a difficult situation to the capitalist State. But we have had a post-war situation before.

"And Italian Fascists may go left with a losing war," suggests another letter-writer. They may, because Fascism is, after all, a radical populist movement, and basically a reformist movement.

Our job remains not merely of opposition to Fascism, but predominantly the deeper task of agitation for a fundamental social change.

H.

#### NEW PREMISES

A further list of donations to the New Premises Fund will be found below.

If you do not see your donation acknowledged in the list, write to the General Secretary of the Party. The donations shown are those received up to March 20th only.

*Donations to New Premises Fund (to March 20th).—*  
£123 7s. 11d.; W.H.S., 6s.; A.Y.D., 2s. 6d.; A.B., 5s.; J.W.C., 5s.; Mrs. L., 15s. 3d.; J.R., 1s.; Choc. J.B., 6s.; East Yorks., £1; A.P., 10s.; J.O., 2s.; J.R., 1s.; Esperanto, 2s. 6d.; G.B., 5s.; F.W.S., 5s.; Edinburgh Branch, £1; C.C. 2s.; Manchester Branch, £1 10s.; W.G., 1s.; A.C., 2s. 6d.; A.C. Syrup, 2s. 6d.; A.R.R., 1s.; Mrs. Egan, 10s.

*Donations to General Account.—R.M., 18s. 9d.; G.J., 1s. 6d.; W.J.F., 1s. 6d.*

#### The 32nd Annual PARTY CONFERENCE

will be held on

Friday and Saturday, April 10th and 11th

at  
FAIRFAX HALL

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

(Id. Bus or Tram from Finsbury Park Underground Station)

Commence at 11 a.m.

OPEN TO ALL

#### The Annual PARTY RE-UNION

will take place in the above Hall on

Good Friday, April 10th, at 7.30 p.m.

Doors open 7 p.m.

Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or from any Member of the Social Committee at Head Office.

Price 1/- each

(Enclose 1d. Postage with each order)

#### Easter Sunday, April 12th

#### RALLY TO HYDE PARK

from 4 p.m. onwards

LONDON AND PROVINCIAL SPEAKERS



## Answers to Correspondents

### SOCIALISTS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

The various points in the following letter are replied to below.

Waltham.

Dear Sir,

I was much interested in December copy of SOCIALIST STANDARD, which a member of S.P.G.B. lent me. In one article questions were invited, and I wish to take advantage of this invitation. I understand that the viewpoint of the S.P.G.B. is that palliatives only retard, and in the article on "Justice to Miners" it appears that the S.P.G.B. are not in favour of the miners getting 2s. per shift rise in wages, but consider that the miners should go all out for the control of industry. Do you consider that the miners would get sufficient backing from the general public? In explaining the attitude of S.P.G.B. toward the Labour Party, it appears that the S.P.G.B. consider that harm is done to Socialism by Labour's efforts to reform Capitalism. Do you seriously think that Socialism can come in one lump, and need not be brought in piecemeal, as in the Labour Party's policy? I have read the S.P.G.B. manifesto as set out in "Socialism and Religion," and am quite in agreement with this in general, but I think the attitude toward other parties is rather too severe. Remembering that the S.P.G.B. is probably the smallest party which is striving for Socialism, do you think that all other parties could be brought to the same way of thinking, and Socialism brought in quicker than, say, by a Communist uprising? I am a member of the Labour Party, and am by no means satisfied with the slow and steady policy of that party. I should like to join the S.P.G.B., but I want to feel that I am in entire agreement with the policy. Many votes were lost to Labour at the last Election because Socialists of other parties would not vote for Labour, and by not voting they only strengthened the Tories. Surely some working agreement could be arrived at between the various Socialist Parties, so that we were able to defeat the Capitalists, and we could afterwards settle our own little differences. I think if we were all to work together many members of the Labour Party would join the ranks of the S.P.G.B.

Yours in the Cause of Socialism,  
W. J. LAST.

#### Reply.

Our correspondent has not properly understood the case of the S.P.G.B. against Labourism.

We do not condemn palliatives because they retard progress to Socialism but because the arguments put forward in support of them retard that progress. The Labour Party argues that the workers' conditions can be gradually improved and improved until, imperceptibly, we shall be living under Socialism. If that were true there would be no need for the S.P.G.B. As it is wholly untrue the Labour party, by propagating that view, hinders our propaganda, which is of a fundamentally different kind. We say that the destruction of the basis of capitalism—the private ownership and control of the means of production and distribution—has not begun and cannot begin until after an organised Socialist majority has gained control of the political machinery.

There is the further point that most "palliatives" do not "palliate," and the consequent dis-

appointment of the workers makes for apathy and thus further retards Socialism.

It is not true that the S.P.G.B. are "not in favour of the miners getting 2s. per shift rise in wages," nor do we advocate so-called miners' control of the mining industry. We always support the efforts of the workers to resist the encroachments of the employers and to improve their conditions under capitalism to the limited extent possible. What we add is that no efforts on the industrial field can ever go beyond the narrow limits set by capitalism. To go beyond that and achieve Socialism there must be an organised Socialist majority in control of the machinery of Government.

We reject the slogan, "The mines for the miners," because we are Socialists, not syndicalists. We work for ownership and control by the whole community.

The question at issue between Socialists and the Labour Party is not whether Socialism can come "in one lump" or "piecemeal," but whether the Labour Party seeks Socialism at all. Socialism means a system of society based on common ownership of the means of production and distribution, and involves the complete abolition of buying and selling, rent, interest and profit, and the rest of the monetary institutions of capitalism. That is the only solution to the problem before us and it is a solution which most Labour Party supporters have not considered and which the rest reject. The aim of the Labour Party is a State-controlled capitalism retaining all of the things which Socialism will abolish, except that the direct control of capitalist companies would, under Labour rule, be replaced by so-called public utility corporations. Socialists are absolutely opposed to the establishment of this slightly modified form of capitalism. This disposes of our correspondent's argument that there are only "little differences" between the S.P.G.B. and the Labour Party. The difference is as wide and deep as that between capitalism and Socialism.

The only remaining point is the reference to a "Communist uprising." No uprising by a minority against the stupendous forces of the State could in any circumstances achieve Socialism. It could only serve to set back still further the progress to Socialism.

ED. COMM.

### THE POLICY OF THE HALF-LOAF IS UNWORKABLE

A READER of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD puts the following criticism of our propaganda:—

I am afraid that while admiring the principles of the S.P.G.B., I do not approve of the split in the Left Movement, which the S.P.G.B.'s denunciations of every other Left-wing group would undoubtedly open if ever they attained the position of putting up

candidates for Parliament. I cannot really believe that the S.P.G.B. is the only party in step. If my opinion is wrong, then it can only be because I am not truly a Socialist; anyway, I stand for the half-loaf the Labour Party may give us soon, rather than the no bread which a series of antagonistic factions on the Left will give us. Solid achievements in Social Reform will, I think, bring us nearer to Socialism than theoretical propaganda, if carried out by a Labour Government pledged to revolutionary Socialism.

#### Reply.

The three points in our correspondent's letter are (1) the desire for unity, (2) the value of "solid achievements in Social Reform," and (3) the Labour Party as an instrument for gaining Socialism.

The desire for unity is one which arises naturally among workers who have begun to appreciate that the working class have interests in common. "One interest, why not one organisation?" But this vague conception of the identity of interests of the workers is not a sufficient basis for unity. Organisations with, broadly, the same aim of improving the conditions of the workers may be, and often are, seriously divided about objects and methods. In these circumstances real unity is impossible, and where two such organisations amalgamate or associate the friction is only transferred from the outside to the inside, without any advantage to the workers. The S.P.G.B. holds that democratic methods are the only methods by which Socialism can be achieved. How could we suspend our condemnation of organisations which advocate other methods which we know will cause nothing but loss and suffering to the workers? During war-time, various so-called workers' organisations are found actively supporting war. How can the S.P.G.B. refrain from denouncing them? The fact that some organisations have working class members and claim to be aiming at improving the condition of the workers does not rule out the possibility that their programmes may be useless, their methods dangerous and their activities harmful to the workers.

The phrase, "solid achievements in social reform," is a mistaken one. It does not fit the facts. The idea of the Labour Party is that on the firm basis of the workers' existing standard of living a "solid achievement" of reforms can be built up, so that the workers will get better and better off, and be freed from one after another of the evils resulting from capitalism. This conception is wholly wrong. There is, under capitalism, no solid basis on which to build, and there is no means by which the workers under capitalism can be saved from the evils of capitalism. The workers cannot be protected from permanent unemployment, or from the catastrophic effects of capitalist crises, except by abolishing capitalism. In this year 1936, over thirty years since the Labour Party began its work, there is not one major problem solved or on the way to solution. The workers are still poor and miserably housed, while the number unemployed or directly threatened with unemployment is larger

than ever. Neither the slum problem nor the "low-wage" problem has been solved. The danger of war has not been removed or lessened. Where, then, are the solid achievements which our correspondent fancies are preferable to Socialism? No such choice exists. For the workers now, as in 1900, the only chance is between the capitalism that is and the Socialism that might be.

The next point we are asked to consider is the likelihood of Socialism being advanced by "a Labour Government pledged to revolutionary Socialism." We cannot admit our correspondent's case, because there is not and cannot be such a thing as a Labour Government "pledged to revolutionary Socialism." The whole essence of Labourism (as indeed is emphasised by our correspondent earlier in his letter) is that it works not for "revolutionary Socialism" but by seeking social reforms. Before it will be possible to have the political machinery controlled by an organised majority "pledged to revolutionary Socialism," the theoretical propaganda which our correspondent rejects will have had to be carried to the mass of the workers. How else can they come to understand and want Socialism?

The S.P.G.B. holds that there is only one problem and only one solution. The means of production and distribution must be made the common property of society. Articles must be produced simply for use, freely, by the members of society. The Labour Party does not seek this solution. On the contrary, in theory as well as in practice, it rejects it. The Labour Party does not contemplate even the possibility of the destruction of the whole mechanism of buying and selling, of profit making, of incomes from property. While the Socialist works only for a social system in which the necessities of life will be provided freely for all and the work of production will be organised on a co-operative basis without employers and employed, the Labour Party dismisses all that as visionary and Utopian, and builds its schemes on the continuance of the wages system, buying and selling, banking and credit operations, etc. The S.P.G.B. says that there is no solution except common ownership, with all its implications mentioned above. All the rest are indeed out of step with us. Our correspondent wants unity, but wants it by bringing us into step with the Labour Parties. The only unity worth having is unity for Socialism. It can only come about when the workers who now march with the Labour army break step with them and fall into line with us.

ED. COMM.

### RAMBLE O'ER SURREY HILLS

Leatherhead, Mickleham, Ranmore Common, etc., on Monday, April 13th. Meet at London Bridge (Findlaters Corner), 10 a.m. (or at Epsom Stn. at 11 a.m.). Fare and tea, approximately 3/6.



## Outdoor Propaganda

### APRIL

SUNDAYS	5th	12th	19th	26th
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 8 p.m. ...	—	—	Robins	Goldstein
Finsbury Park, 4 p.m. ...	Turner	Cash	Cameron	Wilmott
Clapham Common, 3 p.m. ...	Ambridge Banks	Walker	Ross	
Regents Park, 11.30 a.m. ...	Clifford	Lestor	Turner	Cash
Whipps Cross Corner, 8 p.m. ...	—	—	—	Ginsberg

### WEEK-NIGHTS

Cock Hotel, East Ham, 8 p.m. ...	22nd ...	Lestor	29th ...	Reginald
Highbury Corner, N., 8 p.m. ...	20th ...	Turner	27th ...	Cameron
Ilford Station, 8 p.m. ...	6th ...	Lestor	13th ...	Cash
	20th ...	Isbitsky	27th ...	Ginsberg
Tooting, Undine Street, 8 p.m. ...	4th ...	Banks	11th ...	Ambridge
	18th ...	Reginald	25th ...	Walker
West Green Corner, 8 p.m. ...	4th ...	Godfrey	11th ...	Ross
	18th ...	Goldberg	25th ...	Banks

### BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from Dec. 11th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding, "Besra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Communications to Sec., John McQueen, 27, Nth. Ellen Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to J. Higgins, 18, Balgair Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., T. Conway, 45, Walford Road, N.16.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month in McIntyre's Hall, 151, Lowwaters, at 7 p.m. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

### EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturdays in each month.

April 4th. 3 p.m. National Gallery - KERSLEY  
"ART AND CAPITALIST GROWTH"  
April 18th. 3 p.m. British Museum - REGINALD  
"STONE RESEARCH."

### BLOOMSBURY BRANCH

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guildford Street), W.C.1.

April 6th. "The State and Socialism" - E. BODEN  
"13th. No Lecture."  
"20th. Man and Myth at the Dawn of History" - C. LESTOR  
"27th. Socialism and Communism" - R. ROBERTUS  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion

### SOUTHWARK BRANCH

Lectures will be given on alternate Fridays at 8 p.m. at Head Office.

April 3rd. "Science and the Materialist Conception of History" - E. WILMOTT  
"17th. Japan's threat to the World" - KOHN  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and Discussion.

### BATTERSEA BRANCH

Lectures will be given on alternate Thursdays at 8 p.m. at Latchmere Road Baths, Small Waiting Room (Burns Road).

April 9th. "Theory of Value" - HAYDEN  
"23rd. Division of Surplus Value" - GOLDBERG  
All invited. Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 142, Richmond Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigweil Cafe, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester. Lectures every Sunday evening, at 7.30 p.m., at above Cafe.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., I. Benjamin, at above address.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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*It is not the  
qualities but  
the fortunes  
of men that  
makes the  
difference...  
between...  
them.*

ROCHEFOUCAULD  
(1613—1680)

## MAY DAY MUSINGS

### THE TRAGEDY OF DEMONSTRATIONS

ON May 1st thousands of workers walk in procession and gather round platforms to listen to fiery speeches and pass idle and fruitless resolutions on questions of the day. For many years now these May Day demonstrations have been held, and the net result of them all is nil, as far as helping the workers out of their difficulties is concerned.

Like most things, whilst they were new they called forth great enthusiasm, but that was long ago. In pre-war days they were taken seriously, and budding Labour leaders felt that if they wished to make a mark they must appear prominently in these gatherings. Those were the days before Labour Parties had taken a hand in government.

Nowadays "statesmanship" fills up the time of the former rebels, to the almost complete exclusion of popular demonstrations. In other words, the labour machine is now so effective that it no longer needs to depend on these demonstrations to the extent that it used to do.

Each year at May Day demonstrations there is a star question of

temporary importance, about which the speakers lash themselves into a fury. In pre-war days Ireland and India frequently occupied first place. Since the war Russia, the Means Test and Fascism have competed for first place. This year repression in Germany and Italy will take an important place and the orators will doubtless shed a tear for Ethiopia. It is interesting to record, as an example of the futility of mere protests, that exactly 50 years ago, after eight years of savage repression of the workers' organisations in Germany, the Reichstag, despite the protests, extended the anti-Socialist law for a further two years. Jew-baiting and the repression of labour agitation were as strong in Germany then as now, so little do times change as long as the mass of the people fail to understand Socialism and its implications. Italy, too, in the 'nineties of last century, passed through a period which exhibited almost every feature repeated since the war under Mussolini.

Fundamentally, the speakers on May Day are mainly concerned with abstract questions of justice or detailed questions of hours and conditions of labour in particular industries. It is for this reason that people of great diversity of political opinion can gather together on the same platform, and this is also reflected in the conflicting political views of the audiences that unite to cheer the speakers. In pre-war days the writer has seen Cecil Chesterton, Victor Grayson, an Indian Nationalist, an Irish Home Ruler, and other speakers expressing sectional viewpoints, all uniting to pass the resolution of the day—a protest against something or other that was about as useful as appealing to the sky to cease raining.

It is for this reason, the failure to obtain any

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real alteration, that the popularity of May Day is waning. But the empty satisfaction of registering a mere protest will still draw large crowds to these and similar demonstrations.

Enthusiasm is an excellent and valuable thing when rightly applied, but when it is wasted in fruitless directions it only leads to disheartenment and apathy. It is partly on this account that we criticise the May Day demonstrations, and not with any desire to jeer at the genuine enthusiasm of misinformed workers. To watch the serried ranks of bannered processions marching by and to realise that it is but the enthusiasm of a day is heart-breaking to those who have witnessed them for years.

Many of those who in times gone by loudly

proclaimed the solidarity of labour from May Day platforms were afterwards found either on recruiting platforms or in other ways supporting the war of 1914-1918. Doubtless any future war will show many who are now leading the processions following a similar course. Then it was resistance to the German attack on freedom and the plight of small nations. To-morrow it will probably be the same, only with a different name—possibly Fascism and Ethiopia in place of Prussianism and Belgium.

But back of it all there is a gleam of hope. One day the processions that pass will be different. The marchers will be bent on ending the system that exploits them and plunges them into wars, for they will understand the real cause of their troubles and the only way to end them. GILMAC.

## Questions of the Day

### Football Pools and the Workers

WHEN the House of Commons on April 30th debated and rejected a Bill to stop Pool betting nobody appears to have expressed a view really based on working-class interests. They nearly all debated the question under the assumption that the existing social system, or something very much like it, is a permanency. Not one of them put the problem into proper perspective against its capitalist background.

It appears that workers spend something like £20 millions a year on pool betting, and out of this the promoters get a substantial percentage as profit. Mr. Tom Williams, Labour M.P. (Don Valley), said it amounted to £3 million or £4 million a year. What enraged him and made him support the Bill to stop Pool Betting was that this profit is taken by people who "are rendering no service to the State at all," yet their profits are more "than the whole of the coal owners in Great Britain are making in profits," and nearly as much as is paid as rents, royalties and wayleaves in the mining industry. (Hansard, April 3rd, col. 235-8.)

The betting promoters, says Mr. Williams, "have only one interest in life," making profit.

Now we ask Mr. Williams a few questions. Granted that betting promoters are only interested in making profit, how does that distinguish them from other investors, say, for example, investors in mining companies, owners of royalties, or shareholders in Odhams, owners of the *Daily Herald*?

Granted that the investors who have sunk money in betting pools render no service to the community (when Mr. Williams says "the State" he doubtless means the "community") how do they differ from investors in mining companies? What service does Mr. Williams think is rendered to the community by these investors?

Here we have a typical instance of Labour

Party muddle-headedness which distinguishes between one sort of exploitation of the workers and another. The capitalist class as such, that is as receivers of incomes from the ownership of property, render no service to the community whatever. They are an exploiting class pure and simple. They have an interest in fogging the issue by instancing the work a minority of them do in some capacity other than that of shareholders, and by throwing stones at particular forms of profit-making that are unpopular in religious circles, but anyone who understood capitalism would not fall into these errors himself or encourage others to do so. Yet that is the part played by Mr. Williams.

And the whole thing is so trivial. The betting promoters rake off £3 millions or £4 millions, and Mr. Williams hollers his head off. The capitalist class as a whole get, according to one estimate, about £1,260 million a year, and Mr. Williams' contribution towards ending it is to foster the illusion that the mine owners (and other owners) render service to the community!

As for the so-called evils of betting, why do workers bet? To get something for nothing—because they know that hard work, knowledge, skill and endurance will not guarantee them comfort or security. To get some pleasure and excitement—because their work and their living conditions are so tedious and drab.

The task for every thinking person is to get rid of capitalism and to stop wasting time on a hopeless attempt to suppress the expedients to which capitalism drives workers who can see no other way out. As soon as workers can be shown that positive, speedy and certain action against capitalism is a possibility they will turn from any over-mastering absorption in betting.

In the meantime it will be noticed that while pool betting raises such a storm, other forms of

betting favoured by the majority of the capitalists pass almost unnoticed, e.g., the recent card party where thousands of pounds were lost and won in a night of card playing.

\* \* \*

### The Cost-of-Living Index

The Government, after years of pondering, have decided to revise the basis of the cost-of-living index. The less important limitations of the present index are fairly well known. It is based on the kind of articles purchased by a working-class family before the War, and many articles now in use are not included. It takes hardly any account of the extent to which workers live in houses which are not subject to control under the Rent Acts, being confined solely to houses built before the War. This limitation naturally makes the increase in rents since 1914 appear to be much less than it really is.

These criticisms are concerned with the way the index meets the purpose for which it was intended. What is rarely mentioned is the purpose itself. The index was never intended to show how much it would cost to keep a family supplied with adequate food and clothing and housing accommodation. Its purpose was only to show how much more or less it would cost from month to month to provide the inadequate quantities and qualities which working-class families were found to be supplied with in 1914. From any point of view except the interest of the employing class the whole thing is fantastic. In a reasonably constituted system of society people would want to know how much the labour of all would provide for all to consume. The desire would be to provide as much as possible for all, with due consideration to the number of hours of work all would want to put in. Raising the standard of comfort would be balanced against the resulting necessity of working harder or longer to do it. But under capitalism the capitalist lives on profit, and therefore has a vested interest in keeping wages down to the minimum consonant with maintaining a certain level of health and efficiency among the workers. So the Government goes to great pains to construct an index which will tell the employers whether their workers are getting a little more or a little less of the necessities of life than they were in July, 1914.

What a system! And what a waste of human ingenuity compiling such a fatuous instrument, useful only to the exploiting class.

\* \* \*

### The School-Leaving Age

The last Labour Government introduced a Bill to raise the school-leaving age to 15, with maintenance grants of 5s. to parents where the father's earnings were below a certain level, varied according to the number of dependent children. The Bill was rejected by the House of Lords and the

collapse of the Labour Government ended the matter.

The present Government is now pushing through a Bill to raise the age to 15, without maintenance grants, and with provision for exemptions, which is expected to result in the majority of children being allowed to work from age 14.

The problem of the school age demonstrates the impossibility of tackling poverty piecemeal, and the difference between reformers and Socialists. Because the workers are condemned to poverty under capitalism they cannot regard the question from the point of view of the welfare of their children. Yet they know that exploitation in factories and offices is bad for the children at age 14 or any age. They are compelled to consider the possibility of increasing the family income in order to provide adequate food and clothing even if it is bad for the child. So, some workers, forced to choose between evils, prefer that the school age should not be raised.

On the other hand many employers have an interest in getting cheap child labour, and therefore oppose the proposal, again without thinking of the welfare of the children.

Under Socialism the needs of all will be provided freely as a matter of course. This conflict of interests between parents and children, between poverty and education, between one class living by profit and another class living by working, will have disappeared. And in another way the position will have undergone a fundamental change. At present, because going to work means being exploited the Labour Party assumes that the only line of advance must always be in the direction of raising the school age still further. Socialists see that what may be a sound policy for workers to adopt under capitalism may be quite different from education policy under Socialism. Under Socialism going to work will no longer mean being exploited to provide profit, but will be co-operation in the task of providing the needs of Society. Under the best factory conditions that will then be provided there will be no reason why—as was suggested by Marx long ago—learning from books and teachers should not be dovetailed into learning by working. It is not a matter for prophecy but a matter for an open mind until such time as the achievement of Socialism makes it a practical question.

\* \* \*

### No Banks Under Socialism

Banks cannot be "socialised." They are part of capitalism and will end with the coming of Socialism. Under Socialism the functions performed by the banks will not have to be performed at all. The provision of the needs of life will be simplified once the means of production and distribution are made the common property of Society as a whole. At present the workers may not go to



work producing and distributing food, clothing, and so on, without obtaining the permission of the owners of the land, factories and railways. Under capitalism we have to enter into a complicated and wasteful system of negotiating wages between workers and employers, negotiating for the purchase of raw materials, and then organising for the sale of the goods, and the allocation of the proceeds as rent, interest, profit and taxes. Underneath it all is the essential feature of capitalism, that the capitalists own the means of production and the goods produced by the workers they employ. The banks exist because of the monetary system by means of which capitalism carries on all these complex relationships between the individual owners of property, between them and the workers, and between both and the State. Money and banks only exist because of the private property system. Socialism will cut out all these intermediate steps. There will be no private ownership and control of the means of production and distribution. Society through its appropriate organisations will handle the much-simplified problem of producing goods in the quantities and in the places required, and of transporting them to the places where they are needed. There will be no wages system, no rent, interest or profit—hence no monetary system and no banks. That is why Socialists oppose schemes put forward by Lord Beaverbrook on the one hand and by the Labour Party on the other for making privately owned banks into State banks. Socialists want no banks, neither better banks nor Government banks.

That Socialists are right in saying that the way banks are run is a capitalist question, not a workers' question, is shown by the fact that there are many State banks but no countries where the workers' problems have been solved. Would Lord Beaverbrook be found advocating State banks if they were a Socialist idea? New Zealand's Labour Government has just made the bank into a State bank, but the *Times*, quite correctly, says that "New Zealand is moving towards State capitalism." (*Times*, March 31st.) That is what it is, "State capitalism," not Socialism. That is why the *Times* can say that the rest of the world will follow the experiments of the Labour Government "with sympathy and interest" (March 27th), and why another capitalist paper, the *Manchester Guardian* (March 31st), can say that the New Zealand Labour Government's policy generally is only following "mildly in the footsteps of Mr. Roosevelt in the capitalist United States." They would not be sympathetic towards Socialism as they are towards State capitalism.

It is when we come to the Labour Party that we find the most mischievous propaganda of all—mischievous, that is, in relation to the propaganda for Socialism. Labour Party writers such as Mr. Francis Williams, City Editor of the *Daily Herald*, always represent State banks as being Socialist

institutions. In his case it is done out of pure ignorance of Socialism. Yet his own arguments for State banks are enough to show that there is nothing in them for the workers. In an article in the *Daily Herald* on March 27th, Mr. Williams tells us that the New Zealand Labour Government's action had the support of "large numbers of business men and industrialists"—by industrialists, of course, is meant capitalists. He also tells us that "similar proposals are now under consideration (and will be carried through shortly) by the *Liberal Government* of Canada." (Our italics.) Lastly, Mr. Williams relates with pride that the State bank in Sweden, where there is a Labour Government, has been so successful that "foreign capital has rushed to Sweden on many occasions."

All that Mr. Williams has shown is that State banks are compatible with capitalism and may even be better for capitalism's needs than private banks have shown themselves to be under changing conditions since the War. In short, neither Mr. Williams nor State banks can help us with our problem of abolishing capitalism and establishing Socialism.

#### Artificial Barriers between Indian and English Workers.

In an address to the recent Congress at Nagpur of the National Trades Union Federation, the President, Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta, surveyed the problems facing Indian workers, and gave many excellent pieces of advice. On one thing, however, Mr. Mehta's speech is difficult to understand, that is the question of Nationalism. We gather that Mr. Mehta's general attitude, like that of many of the professional men who have given the benefit of their education and experience to the Indian trade union movement, is that Nationalism in India is so strong that it is at present hopeless to struggle against it directly. All that can be done, they say, is to try to build up working class organisations with the support or, at least, with the neutrality of the Nationalist movement, using every opportunity gradually to wean them away from Nationalism.

The National Trades Union Federation has been distinguished from other Indian trade union bodies by maintaining an attitude of keeping out of party political questions as much as possible. It is all the more surprising, therefore, to see Mr. Mehta not only supporting Nationalism but also, in effect, encouraging hostility towards the workers of other countries. It is not that Mr. Mehta shares the illusions of some nationalists of believing that Indian employers will drop their class interests and help the Indian workers. Indeed, Mr. Mehta says quite frankly (*Indian Labour Journal*, December 29th) that he rules "the Indian employer out of consideration altogether. He has hardly yet emerged from the mentality of the capitalist in England during the beginnings of the Industrial

Revolution of the 18th century . . . as a class he only offers blind resistance to the claims of the workers." Yet, in face of that, Mr. Mehta advocates the illogical policy of workers and their Indian exploiters uniting together for so-called National independence. He declares, without any ambiguity, that "while the anti-imperialist struggle . . . holds the field the cleavage of class interests should be deliberately kept in partial abeyance" inside the nationalist movement.

As a justification for this attitude, Mr. Mehta represented the struggle as one between the "Indian" and the "Britisher," the latter being "a perfect artist in the game of make-believe; his determination to hold India for his own advantage is unshakable and he rises equal to any emergency; his repertoire of repression is inexhaustible."

Mr. Mehta said this, but he must surely know that it is likely to convey falsehood to his listeners. India, like Britain, is controlled by exploiters, and there is not a halfpenny to choose between the Indian ones and the British ones. Mr. Mehta has seen something, though doubtless not the worst, of the slums and "depressed areas" in Britain. Will he, on reflection, maintain that the undernourished millions of Britain reap anything from the exploitation of the Indian masses by their Indian and British exploiters? Just recently, an inquiry into Indian and English diets by Sir Robert McCarrison, claimed to be one of the greatest authorities on nutrition, discloses that the typical diet of the English worker is little or no better from the point of view of nourishment and resistance to disease than the diet of the worst-fed Indian. (See *Times* and *Daily Herald*, February 11th, 1936.)

Another fact Mr. Mehta might ponder over is that not one English worker in a 100 could afford the passage money for a trip to India and back, even if he were in work and had his job kept open for him.

Mr. Mehta goes on to say that "in spite of its democratic professions British Labour has to pander to the imperialistic tendencies of the Britisher." This is hardly correct. The British Labour Party does not *have to* pander to imperialist and other capitalist ideas. It chooses to do so because it wants votes and support, quickly, and in as large measure as possible. But how can Mr. Mehta throw stones at them for doing just the same as he does? He defends his appeal to Nationalism by instancing the British Labour Party—and they, of course, justify themselves by referring to him and his fellow Indian nationalists and the nationalists of other lands.

Mr. Mehta might have pointed out to his audience that the S.P.G.B. does not pander to imperialism, whatever the Labour Party does. The Indian and British workers have interests in common, interests which bind them to workers in all lands. To encourage recognition of this community

of interests is the duty of all who profess to be Socialists and a first step should be the discouragement of all national hatreds, and the delusions on which they feed.

P.S.

## New Premises Fund

Owing to the impossibility of obtaining suitable new premises before the expiration of our lease on our present headquarters, the prospect of removal has had to be deferred for a while. Negotiations for suitable premises, which promised to reach a satisfactory conclusion, were suddenly broken off by the owners without reason being given, presumably on the ground that they objected to the S.P.G.B. as tenants. This left us no time for anything but to renew our present lease for the minimum period, one year. The search is being continued and we hope to find the right kind of place within the year at our disposal—provided that adequate funds are donated to meet the higher rent and other expenses. So far £156 has been received, the latest donations being listed below. If you do not see your donations acknowledged in the list, write to the General Secretary of the Party. The donations are those received up to April 15th only.

All cheques, money orders and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

#### DONATIONS TO NEW PREMISES FUND.

Donations previously acknowledged.—£133 8s. 2d.; Ilford Branch, 6s.; Chiswick Branch, 8s.; Chiswick Branch (Stamps), £1 14s. 0d.; C. H. Hart, 2s. 6d.; W.S.P., Los Ang., £1; Tottenham Branch, 15s.; W. B. Bailey, 4s. 6d.; F. G. Mandy, 5s.; C. F. Clark, 2s. 6d.; West Ham Branch, 8s.; J. C., 2s.; Abrahams and Stamps Sheet, 10s.; S. Cash, 10s.; Bloomsbury Branch, £1 1s. 6d.; A. McInnes, 10s.; Manchester Branch, 13s. 3d.; Cliff Allen, 2s. 6d.; Collins, Sheet, 3s. 4d.; Wallis, 10s.; H. Gleeson, 4s.; Miss Evans, Sheet, 2s. 6d.; Islington Branch, 14s. 4d.; West Ham Branch, £1 12s. 8d.; S. A. G., 5s.; F. J. H., £1; E. W. Allsop, 2s. 6d.; S. Arrowsmith, 4s.; Bloomsbury Branch, Sheet, 10s.; Luton, Com., 2s. 6d.; Battersea Branch, £3 11s. 1d.; Southend, Branch, 16s. 6d.; West Ham Branch, 6s. 0½d.

#### GUARANTEE FUND.

Lewisham, 5s.; J. M. S., 5s.; Reg., 10s.; M. W. B., 10s.; F. A., 1s.; S. S., 10s.; O. C., 10s.; G. A., 10s.; Reg., 10s.; J. M. S., 5s.; F. G., 2s. 6d.

#### DONATIONS TO GENERAL ACCOUNT.

A. J. F., 6d.; Bloomsbury Branch, £1; Central Branch, £1 0s. 10d.; F. E., £1 10s.; J. W. S., 2s. 6d.

## MANCHESTER

### A DEMONSTRATION

will be held on Sunday, May 3rd

IN STEVENSON SQUARE

at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker . . . Tony Turner



## Slaves of the Belt

**N**OWADAYS, in this queer world, we hear a lot about "guarding against a C 3 nation." In the schools girls and boys are taught to drill, dance and swim, and milk is supplied them free in some cases. Later on, father and mother keep a watchful eye on them during the "flirting" period in case either party is not quite "naice." The parents insist they "must look after their girls in case any harm befall them."

Should either party default in any way (according to the accepted conventions) he or she is threatened with little short of being murdered, exposure, ruin, and maybe "breach."

But that seems to be about as far as any of the parties seem to trouble about what happens to themselves (parents and the children alike), that is, the conditions under which they earn a living and spend most of their waking hours. The parents probably think the children are lucky to be in work, and "a bit of hard work won't hurt them," whilst the children don't pay much heed when young: they are, for the time, "out to enjoy themselves," such as it may be.

Should the child's conditions of labour almost wear her (or him) out, often the parent seems quite indifferent, and sees no necessity to attempt to alter those conditions, nay, will say "they can't be altered." Meanwhile, often in the adolescent period, the doctors' bills pile up with "Cynthia" going queer, first with this, then that, and the doctors lament the fact that neurosis, neurasthenia, hysteria, stammering and other nervous complaints, and maiming in industry, are all on the increase, but they say they can't understand why.

If they looked into modern methods of production they would speedily find the answer.

Since the War, machine production has advanced rapidly. The most modern method, used whenever possible, is that of the "conveyor belt system," briefly known as "the belt," and working on the belt and the conditions attaching thereto need to be seen to be believed.

The belt is now applied to several industries, and possibly we have to thank Mr. Ford for the original. Since then, the other motor factories have taken to it, also the vehicle builders, bottle-washing and filling in dairies, baking, fish-canning, wireless, toy-making, dressmaking, and tailoring. Its use will doubtless extend to other trades. Production is cheaper and more rapid by this method, which means, all else being equal, increased profits.

Let us hear "the song of the shirt," taken from *Reynolds* (February 16th, 1936), in an article "That Devil, the Conveyor Belt." The writer informs us that Mr. Bernard Sullivan, London District Secretary of the National Union of Tailors

and Garment Workers, reports the following of his members working on the belt:—

In some London firms, 20 girls at each belt turn out 40 dozen shirts a day. They are paid 2d. to 8d. per pair, according to age. Cost of making one shirt equals 1½d. Another firm gets 40½ dozen shirts from 24 girls. Under the old, individual rate of 4d. per shirt, the total cost would have been £8 2s. Belt production cost £5 14s.

In tailors' factories, 18 girls are turning out 40 pairs trousers per hour, and at dressmaking, 16 girls are expected to produce a complete dress every three minutes.

Now how is this mad rate kept up? Let me quote *Reynolds* again:—

"A glance at the girls working on a belt in a shirt factory is sufficient to convince anybody of the evil effects on the mind. The girls sit 10 each side of the belt, all one way, facing the stream. Shirts are brought in piles to the belt, cut, but unstitched. Each girl has a separate operation. It may be sewing on the strap, or putting on buttons, etc. As the shirts move along the belt they are seized by the girls, feverishly stitched, and thrown back again, perhaps in less than a quarter of a minute, for as many as 30 shirts an hour move along each side of the belt, one shirt passing these ten hands in two minutes.

"It might be thought that the pace of the belt would be regulated by the slowest workers, but this is not so. *Teams* are carefully selected according to their skill, and where necessary, two slow workers, who are new to it, share one operation. At all costs the speed of the belt must be maintained.

"A forewoman (or man) is always present. If a girl leaves her place between times, it is taken by the forewoman, and woe betide the girl who keeps the forewoman at the belt longer than necessary. The strain is terrific, for the belt does not allow a second's relaxation."

And now, parent, how does all this affect your daughters (and sons): their health and morale? Mr. B. Sullivan, of the Tailors' Union, once more shall tell us:—

When reports of breakdowns first came to the Union's London office, we thought there must be some exaggeration. On enquiry, I found them amply confirmed. It is quite common for one of a team of girls suddenly to burst into screams and to be carried out in a fit of hysterics. The number of nervous breakdowns is alarming.

And for all this we learn that:—

The best firms have agreed with the Union to limit hours to 44 per week, and pay 10d. per hour to adults, to have five minutes' pause every hour, and a minimum of 80 per cent. over 16. These firms are the exception in the tailoring trades. In a large number of shops the rests are cut out, and 90 per cent. may be under 16. Many 14-year-olds are paid 1½d. per hour, and the average on the belt is about 4d.

Speeding up is ensured by a system of bonuses to the forewomen. Here are extracts from a list of instructions issued to forewomen by a firm of London tailors:—

How can you reduce the cost per unit, and so increase your bonus?

By carefully watching that your people do not wait for work.

By taking on fresh people at the right rate per hour for the particular operation for which you want their services.

By watching the unit-hour of all your operatives. The higher the unit-hour, the lower the cost of your section.

Now, parents, what about your children's welfare now, and what are you going to do about it? And fellow belt-slave, girl or boy, woman or man (you are all alike here), do you not see that this is *all* that modern capitalism has to offer you? Half-starve you, half-clothe you, a slum home, work you harder than any slave was ever driven by a whip, up to the point that you go under and temporarily lose your reason, and so become scrap, and then starve and die. At the end of each week, each year, you are still poor, whilst the factory owners wax fat and prosperous. Does not all this need looking into, for all your sakes: parents and children alike? The "still small voice" answers "yes," and maybe also "How can it be changed?"

The answer is quite plain. We come into the world with nothing, go to school, and get into industry afterwards, still with nothing but our labour power to sell. If we cannot find a master to employ us (to buy our labour power), we are left to starve. If we can, on average we get barely enough to carry us from week to week, and are forced to work as the employer thinks fit, as shown earlier in this article, sweated almost to madness for a bare pittance. In this position there is no hope for the workers—all the benefits go to the masters.

Well, say some, strike. But in belt production, the strike is so difficult as to be almost impossible. The speed of production would carry the masters over quite a period whilst "negotiations" were going on, prior to the strike.

What about a lightning strike? Same again, as the work is on repetition lines, and fresh hands from school would soon be brought in, and knocked quickly into shape, serve their turn, and make way for more, leaving the original strikers high and dry.

What about state control? We already have it in the Post Office, with its starvation wages, and also had it in the munition factories during the last War, in which the very belt which now drives you mad developed, and the social evils still obtain. State workers know poverty as well as those under private companies.

What of the Labour party's "Socialism in our time," and the London Passenger Transport Board? Well, there is serious discontent among those workers, and a member of the Board has declared: "Our first duty, imposed by Parliament, is to our stockholders" (see *Reynolds*, February 6th, 1936). You see, security for the capitalists, nothing for the workers, so there is obviously no

remedy in this. In fact, turn where you will, the capitalist system offers no hope to the workers, only worsened conditions and more speeding up and greater poverty. What, then, is the logical conclusion—the only conclusion one can come to in this matter?

It is this: That the capitalist system of society, which is bound up with all this sordid business, must be destroyed. And by whom? By the working-class itself, whom its destruction will alone benefit. And how is this to be done? Not by any violence and sound-and-fury methods of the Anarchists, Syndicalists, or Communists, or any other such madness, for at the first signs of anything of that kind, the armed forces and police (who are controlled by the masters through their Parliament), would soon put down any such rising. Oh no! The change to Socialism must be made by the workers firstly realising there is no hope for them under capitalism, and by recognising their slave condition, and by organising themselves as a political party on a class-conscious basis, to capture the machinery of government. That can be done by a peaceful weapon which the masters have been forced to give, and repeatedly extended to us, viz., the vote. It is the weapon that gives them their authority to govern, and enables them to taunt you and say: "You sent us there by your votes, to do what we think best." What they do we know too well: they *do* what *they* think best. The value and store they place on the vote can hardly be exaggerated. Some idea can be gathered, for at election times they will promise you anything, they intimidate you, fetch you in their cars (when other times they wouldn't know you, or would hand you to the police), and are generally nice to you; in fact, they will do almost anything, and spend money like water to secure your all-important vote.

But with that vote consciously used, the workers will capture Parliament, and so gain control of Government, and the police, and the armed forces, who can *then* be used to further the workers' interests instead of those of their masters. But it is all-important for the workers to understand what they want, where they are going, and how they are going to get there. No haphazard following of leaders like a lot of sheep is of the slightest use, and it is in this highly important particular that the S.P.G.B. differs from all other political parties. They alone (S.P.G.B.) preach Socialism as the only hope of the workers, to be obtained only by the working-class itself as class-conscious Socialists, organising in the party for the capture of the political machinery, national and local, and so being able, when our numbers are sufficient, to sweep away capitalism and its attendant evils and miseries for ever.

Now, fellow wage-slave, what about it?

C. V. R.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MAY,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## Confusion: Enemy of Socialist Propaganda

### The Communists and Egypt

THE reason why politics have a bad name among so many people is that many politicians and parties can be seen so often sacrificing their principles and independence in order to "do a deal" with rival parties. One day Mr. X denounces Y and Y's party, but within a week they are found working hand-in-hand. This may be all very well for capitalist parties, which differ about details, but agree on fundamental principles, but when the same methods are employed by parties which claim to be aiming at completely different things then the resulting confusion is wholly harmful. No immediate gains can compensate for the evil that is done in the long run. The Socialist movement needs independence and straight, clear-cut principles. That is why the Labour and Communist Parties are to be condemned for their practice of advocating things which have nothing to do with Socialism. Not content with doing this, they make confusion worse by changing their demands from time to time. Anyone who doubts this has only to look up their programmes of a few years ago and compare them with the present programmes.

In 1929, in the Election Programme of the Communist Party ("Class Against Class") we read that the Labour Party "is the third capitalist party." Now the Communists are seeking affiliation with the Labour Party! In the sphere of international politics the Communists have somersaulted just as swiftly. This was their demand in 1929:—

Refusal to vote capitalist war credits. Repudiation of all imperialist treaties and pacts—the Versailles Treaty, the Locarno Pact, the Kellogg Pact. Exposure and repudiation of the League of Nations as a capitalist war trust. . . . Withdrawal of all troops from the Rhine, China, India, and Egypt, and all parts of the Empire.

If it was right to demand these things, why are the Communists now demanding quite different things, often the very opposite? Now Russia is itself a member of the "capitalist war trust." Now Russia has a pact with capitalist France, and instructs the French Communists to call off seditious activities in the French army. No longer will French Communists be required to refuse to vote capitalist war credits, because in a war Russia will be depending on the French army. In 1929 Versailles and Locarno were to be repudiated. Now the Communists are hysterically denouncing Germany for repudiating these same treaties. Perhaps the most idiotic of the changes is that referring to Egypt. The present Communist demand is that the British Government close the Suez Canal to Italian forces on their way to Abyssinia. To do that the British army and navy, etc., are required in full strength, but if the Communist demand of 1929 had been carried out all troops would have been withdrawn from Egypt!

In trying to be "practical" and have a policy for the day-to-day problems and entanglements of capitalism, the Communists only succeed in muddling the workers' minds about what is really a very simple question, the need to replace capitalism by Socialism.

In addition they make a laughing stock of themselves and make the workers more than ever inclined to believe that the only wise and sensible people are the capitalist politicians.

Now let us turn from the Communists to another of the obstacles to Socialist propaganda—the I.L.P.

### Leaders Cannot Lead

Their Easter Conference this year was instructive for the reason that it showed a somewhat uncommon instance of the falsity of the idea of leadership. The S.P.G.B.'s attitude is that a party the members of which are not convinced Socialists, is not a Socialist Party, but something else in keeping with the views of the majority of members. Its leaders cannot make it into a Socialist Party, or make it behave as if it were one. A Socialist Party, on the other hand, knows where it is going, and by what road and, therefore, does not have any need or place for leaders.

Usually the leader-ridden parties have muddle-headed leaders, as well as non-Socialist members. Occasionally—as in the I.L.P. over the issue of the Abyssinian war—the leaders take a sound line. The Inner Executive of the I.L.P. passed a reso-

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 78.]

## The Partnership of Marx and Engels

In our March issue, in the review of the life of Frederick Engels, reference was made to the articles appearing under Marx's name or attributed to him, which were really written for him by his friend, Engels. In the interests of accuracy it is desirable that Engels' share in the great life partnership should be properly estimated, and it is evident that Gustav Mayer, Riazanov and others, have all erred in greater or less degree.

There is, of course, no question of belittling Marx's great work for the Socialist movement, but only of placing on record that Engels' help entitles him to greater credit than has been allowed by many who have written on the subject in the past. We are indebted to Moses Baritz for the information below, based on a full examination of the correspondence that passed between Marx and Engels. This shows that the articles published in the *New York Tribune* and republished under the title *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, were all written by Engels at Marx's request. Some of these, and later articles, were sent off by Marx quite unaltered. Engels wrote articles for the *New York Tribune* in this fashion from 1851 to 1862, and none of them appeared in Engels' name. The last article (on the Civil War in America) was asked for by Marx in a letter written on March 3rd, 1862. Marx says: "The *Tribune* will print it as a letter from a Foreign Officer." It is evident, therefore, that Riazanov is wrong in suggesting that Marx wrote his own articles from 1852

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Riazanov appears to have blundered when he asserts concerning the articles republished as "The Eastern Question," that Engels was responsible for the military articles and Marx for the ones on

onwards. It is true that Marx wrote to Engels on January 29th, 1853, saying that he had for the first time on the previous day risked writing an article in English for Dana of the *New York Tribune*, but of some 50 requests for articles that have been traced the majority are after that date. Eleanor Marx was quite wrong in attributing the *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* articles to her father, and it is strange that she should have given currency to this error. According to a statement made by Engels to Danielson (in a letter as yet unpublished in the original form) she was engaged on typing copies of her father's original letters addressed to various correspondents throughout the world, and can hardly have missed his numerous requests to Engels.

Adoratski, director of the Marx-Engels Institute of Moscow, states in a footnote to "Karl Marx: Ausgewählte Schriften," that Engels wrote the *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* articles between September, 1851, and September, 1852. While the error here is not great, another publication for which the Institute is responsible, "Karl Marx: Chronik Seines Lebens" contains many errors and should be revised. Scores of articles attributed to Marx in the *N.Y. Tribune*, *Neue Oder Zeitung* and *Die Presse*, Vienna, should be attributed to Engels.



diplomatic and economic questions. Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling, in their preface, say the same. The correspondence indicates that Engels did more than that. Marx writes, for example, in a letter dated March 10th, 1853, saying to Engels: "Above all, this question is military and geographical and, therefore, not in my department. You must once again write this. The Turkish question is 'Spanish' to me. I cannot give you any standpoint (on this subject)." Marx went on to ask Engels to write on the encroachments of Russia in Turkey, the treachery of Aus-

tria, the ambition of France, the interests of England, and the commercial and military importance of the conflict.

Engels replied on March 12th, promising the article in a couple of days. Marx wrote on March 22nd acknowledging the article: "Your article on Turkey. Splendid. It has been sent." Moses Baritz points out, in conclusion, that this very article on Turkey is the first one which Eleanor Marx says was written by her father!

ED., COMM.

## Notes by the Way

### A Life for a Few Kopeks

A LITTLE item of news, tucked away in the *Moscow Daily News* of March 11th, tells more about the condition of affairs in that country than the whole of the propaganda in the rest of the paper. Here it is: "K. A. Notkin, of Startakovskaya Square 1/7, died of a fractured skull, received several days ago, when he jumped from an 'A' streetcar while in motion. Notkin had failed to pay his fare and, according to witnesses, he jumped from the moving car when an inspector approached asking for his ticket. . . . He died without regaining consciousness."

The news item is headed: "Saved a few kopeks; lost his life."

Moscow is not the only place where the struggle for existence among the unprivileged masses of the population makes the saving of a few kopeks a question of importance.

Notkin took a certain risk and was unfortunate enough to lose his life. In London never a day passes without numbers of miserably paid clerks and typists being dragged before the courts and fined for avoiding payment of fare. They don't lose their lives, but often their livelihood. Their employers, who ought to be in court, if anyone should, make an example of them by giving them the sack. The railway companies, whose influence on legislation enables them to hold a perpetual licence to take fares without providing sufficient accommodation for third-class and "workmen" passengers, practice a form of blackmail on those who are caught not paying. They exhibit particulars of convictions in public places, with the name not only of the person fined, but also of the employer. In order to get the notice removed the employer is induced to sack the employee, even if otherwise not disposed to do so.

This is only one of the minor evils of the existing social system, but there is no way of getting rid of it except by introducing Socialism. When travel, like other services, is socialised the population will look back in amazement at the present

condition of affairs, when a group of vested interests, with the backing of the State, laments its inability to keep the railways fully occupied and at the same time maintains an elaborate organisation to prevent useful workers from travelling unless they pay the idle shareholders for permission to do so!

There will then be no more Notkin cases in Moscow or in London.

### "A Crime of Avarice"

On Thursday, April 16th, a woman, Nurse Waddingham, was hanged for murder. She had been found guilty of poisoning a patient in her nursing home, with the object of getting the patient's money. A special correspondent of the *Evening News*, on the day of the execution, wrote at some length on the life of Nurse Waddingham and on the motive for the murder: "Passion played no part in prompting her crime. The motive was one more often associated with men murderers—avarice." Avarice, the dictionary tells us, is "greed of gain." So 34-year-old Nurse Waddingham, widow of "a respectable Nottingham yeoman," mother of five children, was greedy. What made her greedy? A few years ago, during a court case, her household was described: "There seemed never any money in the house, and scarcely any food. No rent had been paid for nearly two years." The *Evening News* mentions this, but makes no comment. Poverty is so common that it is not news unless a murder is committed. Then the very natural desire to have food, clothing and shelter in a world where these exist in abundance—for the privileged minority of the population—is "avaricious" if the person concerned is not a member of the propertied class.

The murder was a callous one, but so are the journalists' capitalist employers callous. They accept the facts of working-class poverty, undernourishment and insecurity as necessary evils, just as they do all the premeditated atrocities of their war makers. Then, when some individual takes to

private murder as a means of getting out of destitution, they sit back and sermonise about avarice. Get rid of the system which imposes poverty on the majority of the population; then most crime will vanish at once.

### Capitalism and Marriage

A very useful addition to the "Home University Library," which, however, presupposes a certain amount of knowledge of the subject by the reader, is "Sex," by Dr. B. P. Wiesner. The author, unlike many who have written on marriage, is not hampered and misled by the view that the existing class division of society into propertied and propertyless, is here for all time, as the following remark shows:—

It is commonplace, and therefore apt to be forgotten, that the structure of society affects the determination of actual matings as much as any primitive sexual tendencies. It is likely that a classless society in which economic factors were eliminated from the choice of a mate would produce a considerable increase in the number of sexually satisfactory matings.—(P. 228.)

### Do We Want More Nationalised Industries?

Mr. John Strachey, writing in the *Daily Worker* (April 9th), resurrects an argument of which we have heard comparatively little in recent years. He was asked what the Communist Party would do if the Labour Party accepted its demand for affiliation, and then a Labour Government proceeded to nationalise the railways and mines, with compensation for the shareholders. "Could the Communist Party support that?"

Mr. Strachey replies thus:—

Yes, there are circumstances in which the Communist Party could support the nationalisation of particular basic industries, even with compensation to their present owners. True, such measures would do little or nothing to alter the present capitalist system, or to take the burden of maintaining the capitalist class off the backs of the British workers. But they could, no doubt, improve the position of the workers within the nationalised industries to a certain extent. By making these workers public servants, they could give them a certain security of employment, pension rights and the like, which would be valuable. Moreover, such nationalisation would be felt to be a step towards the abolition of capitalism in this country.

Mr. Strachey probably does not know that the S.P.G.B. has been contesting that line of reasoning for 32 years now, but in the early days it was the Labour Party and I.L.P. which put it forward. Now the Communists, with both eyes fixed on Russia, have picked up what even many I.L.P. members have thrown away.

First, let us look at a few facts about State employment. Mr. Strachey assumes that Government employees all have pension rights. Actually there are upwards of 200,000, not far short of half the total number, who are unestablished and, therefore, do not receive pensions. About 50,000 are part-time staffs. The bulk of the adult full-time

staffs receive less than £3 a week. Tens of thousands receive less than 50s. Part-time staffs (although many have no other work) receive much less than this, amounts ranging down to £1 and less. The *Daily Worker*, a few days later April 15th) reported that 7,000 sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses get less than £1 a week. It is true that Government employees, on the whole, have more security than workers in industry, but as regards wages, the general practice is that pay inside the Government service is related to pay outside. For some types of work the Government is able to get the men and women it wants at rates well below those paid outside. This is due to the attractiveness of security and pension. Mr. Strachey does not himself rate the alleged advantages of Government employment higher than is indicated by the phrase, "Improve the position of the workers . . . to a certain extent." Against it has to be set the fact that Government servants are denied the right to affiliate with outside Unions, and are subjected to much more rigid and more easily enforced discipline. A Government employee thinks a good many times before he risks action which, if it results in dismissal, robs him of pension rights, and bars him from any other employment in the Government service.

There is another objection which is of more weight still. That is the confusion created in the workers' minds by propaganda in favour of nationalisation.

It would no doubt be argued by Mr. Strachey that, even while supporting nationalisation, the Communists would never pretend that it is Socialism or claim for it merits that it does not possess. Even if that is true, the Communists, by their association with the Labour Party, would be making it easier for the latter to use these arguments. Labour leaders like Mr. Morrison would be claiming that State capitalism is Socialism, and the workers, seeing Communists hob-nobbing with Mr. Morrison, would be less inclined to question the truth of that claim. Besides, once admit that it is good business to support minor modifications of capitalism for the sake of catching votes to help a Labour Government into power, and every dishonesty follows in its train. The Communists who had decided on the end—a Labour Government—would not boggle about the means—supporting appeals to the lack of knowledge among non-Socialist electors. Past experience furnishes innumerable instances of this.

Another point for Mr. Strachey to answer is this: Does he really think that our Post Office, telegraphs and telephones have proved to be steps towards Socialism in their long history of State control?

No! The duty of Socialists is to preach Socialism and work for Socialism. Fostering the illusion that State capitalism is Socialism, or will help Socialism forward, is a job for the defenders



of capitalism. They alone will benefit by such duplicity and confusion mongering.

#### Patriotic Appeals by French Communist Party

The French Communist Party has nearly trebled its membership in two years, according to the *Daily Worker* (April 17th). Its membership is now over 100,000, and it is counting on increasing very considerably its Parliamentary strength at the elections. How that membership is being obtained the Communists do not dwell upon, but there are several indications which go to show that the recruits are attracted by promises of reforms, by patriotic appeals, and by almost everything except allegiance to Socialist principles. The Party's slogans (see April THE SOCIALIST STANDARD) now include "Long Live the Unity of France," and this is what a newspaper correspondent says "In the present international circumstances the Communists hold that their patriotic slogans will appeal more to the rank and file than the old-fashioned internationalism of the Socialists" (Paris correspondent of *Manchester Guardian*, April 6th).

On April 17th the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Herald* reported on the "completely changed attitude of the Communists," and the patriotic propaganda they are now putting over.

The Communists are now part of the people's front, and . . . behave as the most trusty defenders of France's national interests.

M. Renaud Jean, Communist farmers' leader and M.P., appealed on the wireless for national unity and for a happy France, "who should defend every inch of her territory."—(*Daily Herald*, April 17th.)

In spite of this the British Communists will be sure to tell us that French electoral victories are victories for Socialism!

#### War will bring you Rest

Advocates of war rarely state specifically what war achieves. Lt.-Col. C. O. Head has tried to do so. "The Great War," he says, "has so far given us 18 years rest" (*Daily Telegraph*, April 20th). What has been done in the years of rest? "Our country is . . . at the highest pitch of prosperity it has ever reached."

The Lt.-Col. would doubtless be surprised to be told that his argument is true, provided that we consent to look at things from the narrow angle of the small minority of people who own this country. But what of the big majority? Have these been 18 years of rest for the millions unemployed, the millions more who have never been able to afford adequate food, the slum dwellers, and the working class as a whole, never freed from the threat of unemployment and consequent destitution?

#### Capitalists with Consciences

The City Editor of the *Daily Herald* must have been torn between his loyalty to his Labour Party conscience and his duty to the shareholders when he decided to insert, on April 3rd, an advertisement of an issue of shares for a company building naval aircraft for the British Government and foreign Governments. Advertisement revenue is much desired, but, on the other hand, the Labour Party has some views on armaments and "merchants of death." Mr. Williams resolved the conflict by leaving the responsibility with the individual investors.

Investment . . . will be a matter for the individual readers' consciences and the attitude they adopt to the present large expenditure on armaments.

The way of the reformer is always tortuous.

As a member of the Labour Party, the City Editor is required to believe that armament is necessary, but not too much armament, i.e., always less than the Conservatives favour; that profit-making is good, but not too much profit-making and provided that the profit is called interest on Government bonds; that profit-making out of armaments is particularly reprehensible, but that selling advertisement space in the *Daily Herald* to all who can afford to pay for it, including financial concerns helping to raise money for armaments, is not objectionable.

#### Tomfoolery in Threadneedle Street

Gold and silver coinage, and the rest of the financial organisation are necessary to capitalism, but unnecessary now to the human race, provided that Socialism is put in place of the existing social system. People lack the necessities and comforts of life, yet those who govern, engrossed in the interests and ideas of the privileged minority, can find time and money to rebuild that huge useless fortress the Bank of England. The walls are 30ft. high and 2ft. thick, made of reinforced concrete, interlaced by steel-wire ship's cable. The vaults, 60ft. below road level, can be flooded. Work has been going on, according to the *Star* (March 30th) for 12 years, under conditions of the utmost secrecy. It will take many more years yet, and the job will have cost £6,000,000. It will be absolutely impregnable, and strong enough to last 1,000 years.

The question is: What on earth shall we do with it when we have overthrown capitalism?

#### Why Slums? Lord Melchett Tries Again

Lord Melchett, director of Imperial Chemical Industries, Barclays Bank, and several other concerns, is one of those who control industry under capitalism. His views are much sought after, and he is author of "Why the Crisis" and "Modern

Money." He offered in the middle of March to explain how it is that slums and luxury liners, like the "Queen Mary," can exist side by side. His answer was criticised in the April THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. We found it inadequate and so did he, for on April 5th, in an article in the *Sunday Express*, he gave another, quite different answer.

Socialists are used to seeing half-baked and nonsensical social theories presented solemnly by public men, and debated seriously in capitalist circles, but the case before us is alarming, even to us. Lord Melchett, widely experienced "captain of industry," actually thinks he has explained slums and magicked them away by saying that we are now entering into the alloy age, which follows the steel age. "The 'Queen Mary' is the latest and finest product of the new alloy age; the Glasgow slums are the miserable residue of the age out of which we are passing. . . . We are moving forward into a period where we shall be able to do many more of the things that we believe to be worth doing because the necessary materials will be adequate, plentiful and cheap."

So the "Queen Mary" represents the coming alloy age, and the slums represent the steel age, now passing away. Therefore, says Lord Melchett, slums will disappear. If it were not set down in black and white you would think it incredible. Let us present a few facts to Lord Melchett.

The slums are not made of steel. Many of them are 50, and even 100, years old; that is, some of them were built before steel came into use. Lord Melchett's very nice house in Smith Square is not a slum, is not built of alloy or steel, and is not particularly new. Throughout the modern capitalist era shoddy clothes, poor food, jerry-built houses (of wood, brick, stone, concrete, corrugated iron, etc.) have been produced side by side with delightful clothes, the best of foods and palatial wood, brick and stone houses. The reason was not the presence or absence of steel or alloy as an industrial material, but the class-position of the purchaser. Lord Melchett (having received a large sum of money from his father) and being a member of the propertied class, lives in a nice house. Henry Dubb, being a poverty-stricken worker, lives in a slum because that is all he can afford. Alloys and every other kind of new material invented or discovered will be "adequate, plentiful and cheap" for the rich and non-existent for the poor.

Abolish class ownership of the means of production and distribution and you abolish slums—with or without alloys.

#### £5 a Month—But not this Month

Nine months ago, in August, 1935, Mr. Aberhart's party won an overwhelming majority in Alberta by promising to put into operation Major Douglas's fantastic Social Credit scheme, and pay

£5 a month to every adult. Mr. Aberhart pledged himself to have the scheme in operation within 18 months. Major Douglas wrote an article backing the scheme and looking forward to the time, 18 months ahead, when Alberta would be a show-place for the whole world. Half of the stated period has passed, but the only progress has been backwards. Mr. Aberhart informed the *Daily Express* by telephone (see *Daily Express*, April 2nd) that there has been a "bit of trouble" in Eden. The opponents of how to manufacture money with a stroke of the pen, just by writing figures in a book, have defaulted on the repayment of a £640,000 issue of bonds, "because," as Mr. Aberhart explained, "we have not got the money to pay." Mr. Aberhart does not admit defeat, only a certain strategic retreat. The £5 a month won't be ready for payment on the due date, January, 1937, but "in two years, or maybe a bit longer."

So perishes the first attempt to bring Major Douglas down to concrete realities. But the Major escaped from the sinking ship by declining to go to Alberta. He was thereupon dismissed. The *Times* correspondent in Alberta quoted a high Government official as saying that Major Douglas had lost the confidence of the people there. "People will be forced to the opinion that Major Douglas is more a theorist than a practical idealist. . . . they will need to find someone who has the courage of his convictions. . . ." (*Times*, March 25th.) Mr. Aberhart's comment was: "I was disappointed at not being able to persuade Major Douglas to come here. The Government had offered him a free hand. He took a strange position in face of a splendid opportunity" (*Manchester Guardian*, March 31st).

In the meantime, Major Douglas is seeking new worlds to conquer, and sent a telegram of congratulation to the new Labour Government in New Zealand (see *Times*, March 30th). Those of the unemployed who had already packed up to take the trip to Canada must now turn to New Zealand instead.

#### Russia Going Parliamentary—"Amusement Abroad"

The new Constitution which the Russian Bolsheviks have been preparing for about a year is reported to be near completion (*Daily Herald*, February 3rd). According to Molotov they are "going to try to adopt the best elements of the parliamentary system, even though we may cause some amusement abroad by doing so." The various features in which the new Constitution will resemble orthodox parliamentary government are enumerated, but so far there is no hint that the rigid suppression of non-Bolshevik parties, journals and propaganda, will be withdrawn, and unless that is done all talk of democracy will be so much illusion. Neverthe-



less, sooner or later Russia will come into line with the more advanced methods of the countries in which Socialist propaganda is comparatively little hampered by direct State action.

Regarding Molotov's reference to "amusement abroad," we are fully justified in reminding him of the propaganda of the years from 1918 onwards. Not only the Communists but large numbers of so-called left-wing Labour Party adherents poured scorn on democracy and the parliamentary system. When speakers of the S.P.G.B. persisted in pointing out the plain truth that the Soviet system was not an advance on but a retrogression from the methods employed in this country, they were subjected to abuse and ridicule by Communists, who dared not face up to the fact that there could be no Socialism without first winning over a majority. Rather than admit that unpalatable truth, they sought refuge in Utopian schemes of minority revolt and minority rule; and the propaganda for Soviets appeared to supply the requisite undemocratic machinery masquerading under misnomers like "workers' democracy."

It is more amusing still to observe that while the Russians are adopting the parliamentary system the British Communists are still telling the workers to get rid of it and establish the Soviet system.

H.

#### EDITORIAL—continued from page 72.

lution which affirmed that the war between Abyssinia and Italy does not involve issues concerning the workers: "In our estimation the difference between the two rival dictators and the interests behind them are not worth the loss of a single British life" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 13th). Mr. McGovern, M.P., said at the Conference: "I stand apart in the quarrels between them because the Emperor and Mussolini and Baldwin are all the same to me."

Here were leaders giving a sound lead. What happened? The delegates carried a vote of censure by 70 to 57, pointing out, among other things, that this working-class attitude towards war was a violation of the I.L.P.'s declared policy.

The I.L.P., shepherds and sheep together, then went on to show that their leaders' brief lucid interval was soon over, by adopting a long list of reforms of capitalism. With quaint humour they were called "immediate" demands, although some of them (e.g., adequate maintenance for all unemployed persons and their dependants) have been "demanded immediately" by the I.L.P. for over 40 years, and will still be ungranted when capitalism is about to pass out.

Observant readers wondering why the I.L.P. leaders saw the light about war will have noticed the phraseology of the resolution appears to have been adapted from the S.P.G.B.'s War Manifesto.

#### DEATH OF MISS LECHMERE

THE party has lost a long-service member by the death at the age of 80 of Miss Elizabeth Lechmere. She joined our ranks on March 18th, 1909, that is, twenty-seven years ago, and she was no longer young when she joined.

In times gone by she used to appear at meetings of party members, where policy was being discussed in relation to particular questions of the time, and she used to look strangely out of place in her somewhat boisterous surroundings. This was particularly true of the War years. When we saw her slight figure and grey head at a meeting of members just before the War we thought she had strayed in by mistake and would soon be frightened out. But it was not so. She attended the meeting in 1916 when the members gathered together to discuss the position of the members under the Conscription Bill.

Miss Lechmere was always a useful financial contributor and every fund opened was sure of a substantial contribution out of her slender resources, which she supplemented by writing fairy stories. Through all the troubles the party passed she remained to the end a staunch supporter of the party and its policy, and she was a comrade whose passing is very much lamented by those who knew her.

#### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

\* \* \*

#### Educational Visits

Two extremely successful visits, one to the National Gallery and the other to the British Museum, concluded the tours for this season.

Those members who went to the British Museum on the 18th April, expressed their desire for a continuance of these visits next winter, and it is hoped this will be carried out with the same amount of success.

#### LEYTON BRANCH

##### A SOCIAL

will be held on Saturday, May 23rd  
at 5 Upper Walthamstow Road, E.17  
(near L.N.E.R. Station)

Cards - Darts - Music - etc.  
Commence 8 p.m. Admission Free

#### HELP TO INCREASE OUR CIRCULATION

Any member or sympathiser who knows of any mass meetings or places where "The Socialist Standard" can be sold is asked to notify the Literature Circulation Committee at Head Office, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.

#### Communist Nationalism

THE *Manchester Guardian* points out how even the illegal anti-Hitler propaganda in Germany:—

Is permeated with national sentiment. Illegal leaflets—it is not clear whether they were of Socialist or Communist origin—were circulated, calling upon the electors to vote *against* Hitler but *for* Germany. . . . The German Communists, at their congress at Brussels in October, passed a resolution that was full of national sentiment. In this resolution they demanded the "complete abolition of the dictated peace . . . of Versailles," and the "reunion of all sections of the German people who have been torn asunder."—(*Manchester Guardian*, April 1st, 1936.)

\* \* \*

#### Enterprise spreads to Ethiopia

The *News Chronicle* (February 11th) published a report from their representative in French Somaliland that Ras Desta, son-in-law of the Emperor and Commander-in-chief of one of the Abyssinian armies, "was more interested in money-making than in fighting the Italians, and since the outbreak of the war had been making handsome profits from the sale of arms and ammunition to his own troops."

\* \* \*

#### If only Pigs would Fly

"If we could only persuade the Government to pursue a clear, steady and constructive international policy of pacification, I am sure Labour would be willing to lift the issue out of party controversy."—*Mr. Herbert Morrison, at Bristol, February 29th.* (*Sunday Express*, March 1st.)

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Head Office and Headquarters of the Socialist Party in Canada, 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.

Will all those interested in the development of a revolutionary Socialist Party, and desirous of obtaining further information, write to the official Secretary, F. Neale, 179, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.?

Those requiring books or pamphlets on Socialism, or wish to subscribe to the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, official organ of the S.P. of G.B. (subscription rates, 75 cents a year), write to Literature Agent, c/o F. Neale.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand. Secretary, A. W. McMillan, 20, Randwick Crescent, Lower Hutt, Wellington, where *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

N. H. Divall (*Hastings*).—Much of your letter will have been covered by the review of "Soviet Communism," in our April issue. The further point, that "The Fascist leaders are self-admittedly defenders of capitalism," is not correct. Hitler and Mussolini both claim continually that they are Socialists, or defenders of working-class interests. (See *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD*, March, page 40; February, p. 27, and January, p. 8.) It is true that they propagate the idea of "national unity," but so also do the Communists. (See *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD*, April, p. 60.)

For the attitude of the S.P.G.B. regarding the necessity of capturing the State machine, see pamphlet "S.P.G.B. and Questions of the Day" (Chapters XI, XIII, and XIV), and *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD*, November, 1934, and January and February, 1935.

If there are further points write again.

ED., COMM.

#### BLOOMSBURY.

Lectures are given each Monday, at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (Corner of Guilford Street), W.C.1.

May 4	"Socialism and Evolution"	A. REGINALD
11	"Will the Co-ops. Survive under Socialism?"	A. FLOWER
18	"The Bogey of Overpopulation"	W. JAMES
25	"The War Situation" (Open discussion)	A. KOHN

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### BATTERSEA

An Educational Class will be held at Battersea Branch, on Thursday, May 7th, at 8 p.m., at Latchmere Road Baths, Small Waiting Room (entrance in Burns Road).

Subject	Lecturer
"CRISES"	E. WILMOT

(This is the last class this season)

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\* \* \* \* \*

"THE SOCIALIST STANDARD" can be obtained in Central London at:

Collett's Shop, Charing Cross Road.

Newstand at corner of Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road.



## Outdoor Propaganda

MAY

SUNDAYS		3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
Cock Hotel, East Ham	8 p.m.	Cash	Berry	Turner	Robins	Jacobs
Finsbury Park	6 p.m.	Kohn	Grainger	Cash	Wilmot	Turner
Brockwell Park	6 p.m.	Wilmot	Cash	Ross	Kohn	Reginald
Clapham Common	7 p.m.	Goldstein	Reginald	Isbitsky	Banks	Ross
Regents Park	11.30 a.m.	Ross	Lestor	Kohn	Goldstein	Isbitsky
Whipps Cross	8 p.m.	Reginald	Ross	Manion	Berry	Grainger
Victoria Park	5.30 p.m.	Lestor	Turner	Wilmot	Jacobs	Ambridge
SATURDAYS		2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Undine St., Tooting	8 p.m.	Ambridge	Reginald	Banks	Walker	Ross
West Green Corner	8 p.m.	Berry	Banks	Grainger	Goldberg	Ambridge
MONDAYS		4th	11th	18th	25th	
Highbury Corner	8 p.m.	Ross	Godfrey	Goldberg	Cash	
Ilford Station	8 p.m.	Berry	Cash	Goldstein	Godfrey	
WEDNESDAYS		6th	13th	20th	27th	
Cock Hotel, East Ham	8 p.m.	Banks	Turner	Reginald	Ambridge	
Avenue Road, Lewisham	8 p.m.	Wilmot	Walker	Turner	Ross	

ALSO

SUNDAYS	Ridley Road, Dalston, E. ... 8 p.m.
Queens Road, Bayswater ... 8 p.m.	
MONDAYS	Rushcroft Road, Brixton ... 8 p.m.
Ridley Road, Dalston, E. ... 8 p.m.	
WEDNESDAYS	Fulbourne Street, E. ... 8 p.m.
Deanery Road, Stratford ... 8 p.m.	
Hackney Town Hall ... 8 p.m.	
SATURDAYS	Roper Street, Eltham ... 8 p.m.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from Dec. 11th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding, "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Communications to Sec., John McQueen, 27, Nth. Ellen Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.8.

**ECLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15 Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to J. Higgins, 18, Balgair Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., T. Conway, 45, Walford Road, N.16.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month in McIntyre's Hall, 151, Lowwaters, at 7 p.m. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Cafe, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester. Lectures every Sunday evening, at 7.30 p.m., at above Cafe.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., I. Benjamin, at above address.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.23. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 382. Vol. 32]

London, June, 1936

[Monthly. Twopence

*Men in . . .  
earnest have  
no time to  
waste . . .  
weaving fig-  
leaves for the  
naked truth.*

## The United Front in France

**A**T the General Elections which took place in France late in April and early in May there was a considerable gain of seats by the parties grouped together in a "United Front." As a consequence a new Government has been formed, under the premiership of Mr. Leon Blum, the leader of the French Labour Party ("Socialist Party of France"). In the Cabinet with members of his party are also representatives of the French Radical Federation. The Communists (who promoted the United Front) while unwilling to enter the Cabinet, promise to give loyal support in Parliament and in the constituencies. The supporters of the Labour and Communist Parties are overjoyed at what they regard as a victory of

outstanding importance. They foresee the early destruction of the power of the French ruling class and the abolition of poverty and unemployment and, naturally, the British Communists urge that this example of unity be copied here without delay. Let us see how this policy was applied and the results it has brought and is

likely to bring. We shall then be in a position to answer the question whether such a policy should have the backing of the workers and the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

### How it was done

The chief parties to the pact were three in number, the Radicals, the Labour Party ("Socialist Party of France"), and the Communists. The last two are indistinguishable in aim and outlook from the British Labour Party and Communist Party. The Radicals are quite correctly described by the British Communists (see *Daily Worker*, April 30th) as "The French Liberals." They are a capitalist party, but favour moderate social reforms. They were formerly the largest single party in the French Parliament, but had not a majority of the seats.

The method by which the United Front agreement operated has long been practised in French elections—indeed, it was practised by the same three groups down to the 1924 General Election. The electoral system is based on a double ballot. At the first ballot only those candidates are declared elected who get a clear majority of votes over all the remaining candidates. At the second ballot, a week later, a further vote takes place in those constituencies that are not filled at the first vote. At this second vote the successful candidate is the one who tops the poll, whether he gets a clear majority over the rest of the candidates or not. In the great majority of constituencies there has to be this second ballot, as very few candidates get a clear majority over all other candidates.

The United Front parties agreed to support each other at the second ballot by withdrawing the two candidates who were least successful at the

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first ballot. Thus, if a Radical failed to get a clear majority at the first ballot, but nevertheless polled more votes than his Labour and Communist opponents, the two latter withdrew at the second ballot and all three parties backed the Radical. Similar withdrawals of Radicals took place in favour of Labour and Communist, and of Labour candidates in favour of Communists, and Communists in favour of Labour.

The result was as anticipated. The United Front group increased their total vote a little (about 270,000 votes), but gained a considerable number of seats. Owing to the uncertain allegiance of various individuals and sectional groups the position is somewhat uncertain, but is roughly as follows: The United Front group gained about 67 seats, and now numbers 381, out of a total of 618. The two other groups of parties, the Centre Group and the Conservative Group, have about 94 and 143 seats respectively. The United Front consists of 145 Labour, 72 Communists, 115 Radicals and 49 others, and, therefore, has a majority over the rest so long as all members of all its parties stand together. For various reasons, however, this is not likely to be the case for long. Some of the Radicals are certain to break away rather than continue association with the Labour and Communist groups.

The programme on which the United Front candidates fought shows clearly what is the outlook of the electorate.

### The United Front Programme

The programme was a vague one, containing a series of reform proposals. They included a guaranteed minimum wage, a 40-hour week, pensions at 60 or before, public control of public services, including the Bank of France and the railways, suppression of the Fascist Leagues, abolition of private manufacture of armaments, etc., etc. The programme included also support of the League of Nations, the necessity of the maintenance of armaments for national defence, and efforts to secure disarmament, in which Hitler would be asked to join.

Within the joint agreed programme the separate parties put forward their own specific demands and slogans. The Communist slogans were "Long Live the Popular Front," "Bread—Peace—Freedom," "For a Strong, Happy France—vote Communist," "The Rich must Pay," "Long Live the Union of the French nation—against the 200 families who plunder France" (*Daily Worker*, April 27th). The Labourites complained that through maintaining what there was of internationalism in their propaganda they were less effective in appealing to the growing nationalism of the electorate than were the Communists with their appeals to patriotism. According to a correspondent of the *Daily Express* (May 4th) the Com-

munist election posters were decorated with the national colours, blue, white and red! "They have stolen the patriotic thunder of the Right. They have waved the Tricolour, not the Red flag."

In short, as the Liberal-Labour-Communist alliance wanted to win a majority at all costs, they had to put forward a capitalist reform programme—spiced with appeals to fear of Nazi Germany—which would gain a majority of votes. As a newspaper correspondent said, their programme had "to be vague enough to enable Radicals and Communists, friends and enemies of private capitalism, to enter the same fold" (*Times*, April 25th). The correspondent of the Conservative *Daily Telegraph* (May 13th) found "nothing alarming" in the programmes of a Labour and a Communist candidate: "They were at great pains to dispel the conception that any revolution would follow in the trail of their parties' success at the elections"!

### The Price of Compromise

Those who advocate the policy of a United Front with capitalist parties do not always realise that they have to pay a heavy price for the capitalist support they buy. The French Communists were, however, under no illusion. They were willing to pay the price and have admitted it frankly, and they have certainly been more successful than their equally compromising, but less astute, British colleagues. Their seats increased from 10 to 72. It must, however, be borne in mind that this was not mainly due to increased votes (although their vote nearly doubled since 1932), but to the operation of the pact. If the Communists had joined the Radical-Labour pact in 1932 (as they did at earlier elections) they would probably have had 50 seats instead of only 10.

These are some of the items in the price they paid for joining hands with the Radicals. Labour and Communists stood as United Front candidates and in consequence had to sacrifice much of what was distinctive in their own programme. They had to deny to the workers that "Socialism is the only hope" and independence the only method. On the contrary, they had to say that capitalism is not so bad after all, provided that its representatives are Liberals, not Conservatives, and that it is administered by a Lib.-Lab. Government. They had to help save the Radical party from being reduced heavily in size. Here are some statements from Communist sources about how they helped the Labourites and Radicals. The *Daily Worker* (April 29th) denied the suggestion that the pact only helped the Communist Party: "This is not true. The Socialist vote has also increased compared with the last election in 1932."

The following day the *Daily Worker* quoted from the Russian Communist paper, *Izvestia*, the statement that the Radicals "have preserved their influence among the main mass of their voters,

This was the direct result of the fact that they had joined the Anti-Fascist People's Front. . . ."

This, it will be seen, proves that the Communists made and kept a bargain which was fair to the Radicals, but saving a capitalist Liberal Party from extinction is queer work for an alleged working-class party to be doing. In the same issue of the *Daily Worker* is an admission as to the way this party may be expected to act now the Communists have helped to save them. They "are rather apt to be in the United Front during elections, but out of it, and in the camp of the reactionaries after the election."

The passage quoted below is taken from "At the Parting of the Ways," by P. Braun, and has bearing on this policy of entering into pacts with capitalist parties in order to fight "reaction." It relates to France.

It is hardly necessary to point out that such a system of sometimes tacit, and occasionally open, agreements played chiefly into the hands of the social-reformists of various tints, who represent themselves as fighters for "democracy" against reaction.

This book was published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, and consists of an explanation of resolutions passed by the Communist International. The book goes on to give the "new" and correct policy decided on by the French Communist Party, a policy of "unswerving opposition" to Radicals and Labourites—"the voting of Communists for Radicals against the 'rights' should not be permitted."

The book was an official Communist publication, but was published in 1928. What was demonstrably correct in 1928 is not—in Communist circles—of any interest in 1936, for in the meantime the foreign policy of the Russian Government has taken a new turn, and all sub-organisations have to come into line.

### Capitalism Continues

The next question to consider is the outcome of the United Front victory.

The Communists and Labourites are making extravagant claims about the new Government. The Communist *Daily Worker* (May 4th) promised that victory would mean the abolition of slums in Paris; and the Communist leader, Maurice Thorez, says, "We have at our disposal a majority amply sufficient to carry out our programme, and the members of our party can face the future with joy" (*Daily Worker*, May 5th).

These hopes are, of course, doomed to early disappointment. Where there is capitalism there will always be poverty, class-conflict, and discontent, and capitalism will remain in France. Just as Mr. J. H. Thomas declared on behalf of the Labour Government in 1929, that it proposed to work within capitalism, so Mr. Leon Blum, leader of the French Labourites, makes a similar declaration now. At first the election results

frightened the capitalist investors, but Mr. Blum soon made a "reassuring statement," and this "relieved the tension" on the stock exchange (*Daily Telegraph*, May 12th). Mr. Blum's assurance was that he would govern "within the present social régime." (*Times*, May 12th). He also said:—

The aim of the Front Populaire would be to maintain buying power by preventing the diminution of wages and by the stimulation of all forms of economic activity—the possibilities being, of course, limited by the fact that they were working inside a capitalist system which they could not at present abolish.—(*Manchester Guardian*, 11th May. Italics ours.)

The French Labour and Communist parties are thus caught in the trap into which the advocates of compromise always fall. They promise to solve certain urgent problems by entering into pacts with capitalist parties, hoping perhaps to gain strength later on to press forward. They forget that in taking on the administration of capitalism they do not gain strength, but lose it. They at once begin to earn the unpopularity and contempt which always centres on the Government which carries on capitalism. The effort to solve problems inside capitalism creates uncertainty, mistrust, apathy and despair among the workers who have cherished false hopes, and it correspondingly helps the Conservatives and Fascists later on.

### A United Front for Great Britain

What, then, of a United Front in Great Britain, as advocated by the Communists? If modelled on that in France it would include the Labour Party and some of the Liberal Party groups, but in practice there is not much likelihood that either Liberals or Labour Party would consent to enter a pact with a party so unpopular and insignificant in size as the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Let us assume, however, that the Communist Party grows sufficiently in size and influence to be able to compel the Labour Party to come to terms, what would happen then? In the first place, if a United Front were formed, both Labour Party and Liberals would lose the votes of timid electors who would fear association with Communists, however innocuous the reform programme the latter agreed to support. On the other hand, in the unlikely event of an agreement being reached to withdraw opposition candidates in the constituencies, a United Front might, as the *Daily Worker* claims, have won a majority at the last election and then "there would have been no Baldwin Government." (*Daily Worker*, April 29th). Instead—on the French example—there would have been a Labour-Liberal cabinet instead of the present Conservative-Liberal-National Labour cabinet. What difference would it have made? Doubtless it would have granted some more reforms, perhaps the raising of the school-leaving age to 15 without



exemptions, and shorter hours, increased old-age pensions, etc. But it would have carried on the administration of capitalism, which means that it would perpetuate the private ownership of the means of wealth production and the consequent poverty and subjection of the workers. It would have helped employers against strikes. Nothing essential would have been changed. Capitalism and the forces making for war would be with us as now. Why need we wonder what might happen? We know by past experience. The present premier, Mr. Baldwin, is a Conservative. From 1906 to 1923 the premiers were Liberals. Did they keep peace and bring prosperity? No, Poverty, war and crisis. One of them, Mr. Lloyd George, formerly hated and denounced just as Mr. Baldwin is now, would certainly be one of the Liberal ministers in any such United Front Government. Moreover, have we not had two Labour Governments depending on Liberal support? What did they do to help overthrow capitalism? All they overthrew was themselves, hopelessly discredited. In Australia, Labour Governments with

big majorities ruled for years and ended in similar object failure.

The advocates of forming a United Front with non-Socialists and anti-Socialists cannot quote a single instance anywhere of the working-class being materially helped, or of the Socialist cause being aided, by their policy.

As against all this political wirepulling, the Socialist Party stands for the policy of independence. Before Socialism can be achieved, control of the political machinery has to pass from the capitalists to the organised Socialist majority. It is the plain duty of Socialists, therefore, to work to remove the capitalists from Parliament and to avoid like the plague all pacts or propaganda which can only perpetuate in the workers' minds the idea that capitalist rule is not so bad, provided that the capitalists are Liberals or Radicals or Labourites, not Tories or Fascists.

Unity is absolutely indispensable before Socialism can be achieved, but it must be unity of Socialists: on a Socialist programme and in a Socialist Party. H.

## Notes by the Way

**Workers, Beware! All Your Property is at Stake!**

**N**OBODY can complain any longer that they do not know what they stand to lose if they don't go to war. Mr. Churchill has told us, in the *Evening Standard* (May 1st). The article is about German preparations for war, and how this affects us.

One looks at the people going about their daily round, crowding the streets on their business, earning their livelihood, filling the football grounds and cinemas. One reads their newspapers, always full of entertaining headlines, whether the happenings are great or small. Do they realise the way events are trending? And how external forces may affect all their work and pleasure, all their happiness, all their freedom, all their property and all whom they love?

You see now how it is. If you, the workers are not ready to defeat Germany in war, then *all your property is at stake!*

You, the 17½ million adults who don't own even £100, must be ready to fight for Mr. Churchill and his class, so that *their* property is safe.

Mr. Churchill boasts that he never ran away from criticism. Very well, let him tell us why the propertyless majority of the population should sacrifice their lives to protect a country owned by somebody else.

**Prominent Labour Leader Admits that Our Policy is Right**

The case put forward by those who believe in trying to improve and reform capitalism step by

step is that the accumulation of reforms would gradually diminish the gulf between rich and poor until one fine day Socialism would be here. Socialists have always pointed out in reply that this argument overlooks the subordinate and almost defenceless position of the workers against the attacks of employers, and the enormous stream of wealth flowing into the possession of the capitalists year by year. All the money spent by the Government on old-age pensions, unemployment pay, etc., is less than the amount the workers have lost in wages through unemployment and the wage reductions which have taken place over a period of 15 years. Instead of the gulf being removed it has, at best, remained as it was before. In short, all the efforts of the reformers have been wasted so far as helping forward Socialism is concerned. They have barely kept pace with the growth of new problems and the worsening of old ones.

A man who has worked for reforms for over a quarter of a century is Mr. Thomas Johnston, M.P., who held office in the Labour Government, 1929-1931. Reviewing a book on the inequality of wealth, he makes what is to him an amazing discovery, although it is only what the S.P.G.B. has been telling him all these years. Here are Mr. Johnston's words, taken from *Forward* (May 9th, 1936):—

So that despite all the social reforms—all the era of pensions and health insurance, the poor as a class are no less poor than they were a quarter of a century ago.

Having admitted that his party, the Labour Party, has been building on sand all these years,

Mr. Johnston should have gone on to explain what fundamental change of aims he proposes. We await his answer. The next move is with him.

## Practice and Precept

The *Daily Worker* (April 29th), in a review of a new edition of "The Poverty of Philosophy," by Karl Marx (Martin Lawrence, 5s.), reminds us that, in spite of its age, it is a very useful work. Many of the ideas it attacks are as widespread and as dangerous as ever they were; for example, the two opposite notions that the workers should support free trade because it means cheap food, or protection because it means more work. Once it is realised that under capitalism the workers' wages rise and fall in fairly close relationship with the value of the workers' labour-power, or, in other words, with the cost of living the demand for free trade is seen to be nothing more than a demand for bigger profits for the manufacturers. They pay lower wages because the workers' cost of living is less. Marx showed historically how this resulted from the abolition of the Corn Laws, and the *Daily Worker* reviewer agrees with Marx:—

To-day both Free Trade and Protection are being boosted as panaceas for poverty; these keenly pointed criticisms expose both as different methods of capitalist exploitation. No worker who wants to get his bearings in the Free Trade controversy can do better than master what Marx and Engels had to say about it.

There is, however, one odd thing about this. The *Daily Worker* is the mouthpiece of the Communist Party. At the General Elections in 1929, 1931 and 1935 the Communists were demanding Free Trade and the abolition of tariffs! A typical instance is their 1931 Election demand, "No taxes or tariffs which raise the price of food and clothing to the workers."

"He (President Roosevelt) is fighting to save the capitalist system, and not to destroy it."—Sir Arthur Willert, Press Officer and Head of the News Department of the Foreign Office, in an article on American politics. (*Times*, April 29th, 1936.)

## How Wars Arise—A Capitalist Confesses

Mr. S. W. Alexander, City Editor of the *Sunday Express*, is an enthusiast for capitalism, yet in a moment of candour he admits that capitalism and pressure for war are inseparable. This is what he says:—

The British Government is asking for assurances from Chancellor Hitler. He will doubtless give them, for I doubt not that he is a man of peace.

But these questions are not decided by men. Economic forces are the big pressure which changes men's minds overnight.

Hamburg people live on trade, and Germany cannot pay for her imports unless she is permitted to export.

And people who cannot trade will arm, and, despite peaceful protestations, they will one day use arms to get freedom to work and live.

So, unless some big international political change takes place, Britain too will be forced—failing revival in voluntary service—to have conscription to get the men to use the immense quantity of arms that are now being manufactured, in such haste, for our own protection.—(*Sunday Express*, 10th May.)

Here is a highly paid and influential man, one of those on whom our rulers and masters rely for guidance and information, who complacently accepts preparations for world war as if that is the only thing humanity can do. He would say, no doubt, that there is an alternative, the adoption by Governments of policies which would remove tariffs, quotas, and restriction schemes, which interfere with trade. But he has no great hope that they will, so let us, he says, prepare for war. If he would ask himself what are the forces which induce Governments to enter into trade conflicts with each other he would realise that asking them to behave otherwise than they do is to cry for the moon. Capitalism produces poverty and trade depression and Governments cannot alter the facts by trying to be wise. Only by getting rid of buying and selling and profit-seeking will the destructive forces disappear.

## Russian Oil for Italian Bombers?

As the Communists are so full of advice to the British capitalists as to what they ought to have done to prevent the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, what have the Communists to say about the Russian oil supplied to Italy throughout the war? One answer they have given is that it was supplied under contract, and that as the League did not impose oil sanctions, the contract remained. Why, then, was not the contract terminated? And in any event do the Communists admit that Russia is bound by commercial profit-seeking considerations, like other Powers?

## Two Vote-Catching Parties Quarrel

Mr. McGovern, M.P. (I.L.P.) has hard things to say about the Communist M.P., Mr. W. Gallacher (*New Leader*, February 14th). He says that in Gallacher's Election address there was no mention that he was a Communist candidate, and no mention of the word Socialism. "It was the poorest document I have ever seen and could have been issued by any Liberal."

Mr. Gallacher must have learned this vote-catching trick from Miss Jennie Lee (now Mrs. Aneurin Bevan), or some other of Mr. McGovern's I.L.P. colleagues.

## What Socialist Propagandists have to put up with

Thanks to the Labour Party and Liberals, Socialists have to spend much of their time com-



bating wrong ideas about Socialism. Here is one, from the *Liberal News Chronicle* (April 1st, 1936):

Central Electricity Board . . . is the body that runs the Grid. Buys electricity from the generators, sends it over its wires and sells it to the distributing companies. *One of the outstanding and most successful examples of Socialism. Set up by a Conservative Government in 1927. (Italics ours.)—(News Chronicle, 1st April.)*

The Central Electricity Board, like every other capitalist enterprise, pays tribute to the capitalists out of the exploitation of the workers. The annual payment to investors is about £2,107,000, equal to the average wage of 17,000 workers. All that the investors have contributed to the construction and operation of the grid system is to grant permission for their property (accumulated from the exploitation of the workers in the past) to be used. Even the ancient plea of "risk" has no bearing on this, since the investment is guaranteed by the Government, both as to capital and interest. H.

## A Trouble-Saver for Communists

AT the moment we are receiving a steady stream of letters from Communists and their sympathisers explaining why the case for joining the Labour Party is absolutely unanswerable. In 1929 the same people were proving that it was absolutely necessary to *oppose* the Labour Party. In 1923 they proved why it was absolutely necessary to *support* the Labour Party. To save trouble when the Communist Party stands on its head (or its feet) at the next somersault, we print below brief extracts from their statements of policy of 1923 and 1929. From the Communist Party General Election Address, 1923:—

Therefore our immediate object in the present struggle must be the establishment of a Labour Government. . . . Vote Labour and Communist. No Divided Ranks!

From the Communist *Labour Monthly*, January, 1929:—

Until a comparatively recent period many revolutionary workers still believed in the possibility of a constitutional conquest of the Labour Party and its eventual transformation, as the workers became disillusioned in the reformist leadership, into a revolutionary party by a change of leadership. . . . To-day, however, the facts are clear to all. The Labour Party is . . . a machine of reformism, devised by reformism, for the control of the mass organisations, and which is prepared abundantly to protect itself against any danger of transformation. The decisive fight of the revolutionary workers is and can only be outside that machine and against it. . . . The conception of a Socialistic transformation of the Labour Party needs to be denounced, not only as a Utopian dream, but as a reactionary deception and misleading of the workers, and passive support of MacDonald. With this goes equally the conception of the advance of the workers through a Labour Government, or a Left Labour Government, or Left pressure from within the Labour Party upon a Labour Government. The path of advance lies through the independent leadership of the revolutionary workers.

1936. (Same as (1923).)

193—?. (Same as 1929.)

P. S.

## Letters from Prison

BODLEY HEAD has just issued a translation of Toller's "Letters from Prison."

The price (12s. 6d.) puts it outside private working-class reading, but it is well worth a determined effort to get it placed in the Public Library.

Anyone who saw Hinkemann produced at a theatre, unhampered by the personal prejudices of a Censor, who gaily approves the giggles of the highbrow sweet maiden at the adventures of Horner in "The Country Wife," but severely frowns on the topic of actual castration resulting from the Great War, will recognise the merit of the writer as a dramatic artist and, what is more, one acutely sensitive to the tragedy inevitably attaching to Poverty. Drinking to its bitterest dregs the cup of humiliation, rope in hand, the curtain falls on one of the very few great tragic working-class figures in dramatic art.

Toller served five years in prison for the part he played in the abortive Kurt Eisner rising in Bavaria in 1919. Property, scared at even a remote possibility of challenge to its privileges, revealed as usual the imminent Beast concealed beneath the gaudy robes of Church and State. For a taste: A sergeant-major, ordered by his lieutenant to shoot 32 sailors then in gaol, replied (on his own evidence, p. 341): "With the greatest pleasure." A bishop exclaims (p. 69): "Hosannah! I welcome you, blessed flogging, rod of Love." Lest there should be misunderstanding, it was not the Bishop who was flogged. Incidentally, our Soapy Sams manage these things better. The Hungarian bishop should sit at the feet of the Rev. J. R. C. Forrest, who suavely wraps up the same sentiment in "The exercise of force and punishment is a divinely given authority, without which the Church could not carry on" (Oxford Evangelical Conference, April 16th).

Interesting sidelights are thrown on current politics. "A member of the Communist Party was not allowed to talk with us of the Independent S.D. Party" (p. 160). He had received orders to be "very proud and stiff" to fellow "Reds" in gaol. An amusing account is given of the way in which he failed to live up to the rôle decreed for him. Who said "United Front"?

Five years of hell offers an explanation for sentimental passages whose excision would have strengthened the book. For instance, Toller puts on a pedestal the little woman (doing time for killing her child) who appeared at a window in a neighbouring block in the prison, "in order to make men happy for a few seconds" in the extreme limit of undress uniform. Motives are sometimes obscure in the sex line.

The worst part of the volume is a footling preface by the translator, Ellis Roberts, who introduces Toller as a "good left-wing Socialist."

"Letters from Prison" is but one more justification of the policy of the S.P.G.B. expressed tersely in Clause 6 of our Declaration of Principles: "The working class must organise consciously for the conquest of the powers of Government." We can only regret the awful waste, the pitiable suffering, the subsequent disheartening of the working class resulting from sporadic outbursts, doomed to failure.

REGINALD.

## Answers to Correspondents

### Will the Workers ever become Socialists?

R. A. Gilbert (Stroud).—Your view is that it is a disservice to Socialism to attack the Bolshevik Government and deny that "Socialism is being born in Russia." It all depends, of course, on the facts of the case. If you could show that Socialism is being born in Russia we would have no choice but to accept that, but you cannot do so. Like many others who in earlier years have denounced our attitude, and told us to wait and see while this or that Liberal-Labour or Labour Government introduced the millennium, or while this or that minority party seized power and introduced Socialism without first converting a majority to Socialism, you act on faith, and take no regard of the forces which really govern the situation. Socialism cannot be achieved by the "inflexible determination" of leaders, or the inspiration of non-Socialist masses, but only by a politically organised Socialist majority. You suggest that the workers, "in their present environment, are incapable of emerging from the serf-like mentality which obsesses 95 per cent. of them." We would ask you to consider two points: (1) Why are the 95 per cent. not capable of doing what the 5 per cent. have done? (2) On what ground do you assume that the leaders of the Labour Party are more enlightened than their followers? Have you ever contemplated the difficulties of converting the Macdonalds, Thomases, Bevins, Morrisons, etc., from reformism to Socialism? ED., COMM.

### Socialists and Strikes

C. F. Jansen (N.S. Wales).—Your letter only just to hand. Although the hypothetical case you state may seem clear, yet in practice the problem sometimes presents surprising difficulties. We have known of a case, for example, where war-mad workers came out on strike to force a Socialist to signify his support for the war by entering his name under a recruiting scheme. Does he thereby become a blackleg because he defies the Union? What of the cases where men are trying to prevent the employment of women, white men trying to exclude coloured men, or where an outside body is trying to engineer a strike for reasons of its own,

irrespective of the interests of the workers directly concerned? Remembering that these and similar difficulties have to be reckoned with, the position of the S.P.G.B. is that we support the workers on strike against the employers when the strike is for objects that are in the interests of the working class. ED., COMM.

### Bolshevist Notabilities and the Workers

A correspondent (Mr. T. Grenfell, Bath) writes to protest against what he considers the unnecessarily bitter reference to prominent Bolsheviks who attended the funeral of King George V. (See THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, March, p. 38.) In an article contrasting that funeral with the case of a woman who had to push her dead child in a perambulator, the statement was made that "Needless to say, Maxim Litvinoff and Marshal Tushachevsky were not there." Mr. Grenfell takes this as suggesting that the two men "were even less considerate of the sufferings of the bereaved mother than the agents of British imperialism."

We need hardly say that was not the intention of the article, and it had not occurred to us that it would be so understood. The main point was that life and death are little regarded under capitalism unless the persons concerned are wealthy or powerful. A second point was that the representatives of the Russian Government play their part in the official ceremonials of capitalism just like the representatives of other Powers, and attend unofficial ceremonies, such as the Shakespeare commemoration, where their presence is gratuitous and has no bearing on working-class questions. That they and other official personages are sympathetic towards the workers' sufferings is beside the point. The sympathy of the privileged for the unprivileged has no practical effect in social questions. Opposition to capitalism and its representatives is required of all who stand for Socialism. ED., COMM.

N. Lafferty (Edinburgh).—In a letter running to nearly 1,000 words you range over a very large number of points of varying importance. If you will write briefly, telling us what is your essential criticism of the S.P.G.B., and what alternative you advocate, we will publish it, and our reply. ED., COMM.

### CORRECTION

#### "£5 a Month but not this Month"

In the paragraph with the above heading in the May SOCIALIST STANDARD (Page 77), the sentence beginning "The opponents of how to manufacture money with a stroke of the pen" (Column 2, line 11), should read "The advocates, etc. ED. COMM.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## Why the Budget does not Matter

IF the Cabinet is the instrument of the ruling class, what of the Budget, for which the Cabinet, through the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is responsible? Those who do not know the secret will tell you that the Budget is of vital concern to every man and woman in the country. That is the message delivered to you from the platforms of Conservatives and Liberals, Communists and Labourites. Yet again it is not true. The Budget is and must be, under capitalism, a capitalist question. The Cabinet's function is to protect the property of their masters. The Budget is the method by which the necessary armed and civil forces are financed. The merit of the Budget system in this country is, from the capitalist standpoint, that it is closely surrounded by constitutional checks and safeguards, so that there is now no longer any danger of the Monarchy, the House of Lords, the Army, or any section of the capitalist class itself, usurping the powers exercised for the ruling class as a whole.

In modern times the Budget expenditure has included a growing amount of money which is not devoted to maintaining the armed and civil forces, but to what are called social services, the old-age pensions, unemployment pay, and so on. It is here that one source of confusion about the Budget easily arises. Another source of confusion lies in the fact that much of the money raised for the Budget appears to be a burden on the workers. Hence, we have the Labour Party, the Liberals, and

Tories warning you that you have an interest in the nature and amount of taxation, and in the purposes to which Government expenditure is devoted. In an immediate sense there is a grain of truth in this statement. If (which is by no means necessarily the case) the removal of a tax on some article leads to a reduction of price, and if wages remain unchanged, then the workers are at the moment that much in pocket. If, therefore, wages were something fixed and constant, we could say, as the Labour Party does, that lower prices, the removal of taxes on foodstuffs, rents restricted by law, and greater Government expenditure on social reforms are the way to transfer wealth from the rich to the poor, and thus raise the standard of living of the latter. Yet you know yourselves that all the social reforms, the death duties on big fortunes, the surtax and other levies on the rich have not made any noticeable alteration in your position in the past 50 years. The Labour Party is mystified at this failure of events to follow the course it expected them to follow.

Yet a little thought would have shown the Labour Party that its theory was wrong, and that wages are not fixed and constant. Wages follow prices more or less closely and quickly. Thus, in 1921-22, when the cost of living fell by about one-third, so did wages. Wages have been rising lately after a rise of prices. The workers do not benefit, nor have they benefited in the main, by the Government's expenditure on social services, which appear to relieve the workers of certain expenses. In the first place, it must be remembered that the workers suffered heavy loss since the war owing to the bigger volume of unemployment. The employers' and the Government's contributions towards unemployment pay have only partly covered this loss. We also see that, to a great extent, the grant of health-insurance, pensions at 65, war pensions, etc., has merely resulted in corresponding amounts being knocked off the standard rates of pay of the individuals concerned.

So that, in effect, the bigger Government expenditure on these things is, in the main, merely a way of restoring to the workers a part of what was lost to them through the aggravated unemployment since the war.

It is true that the workers' standard of living is itself not unalterably fixed. It is possible, in certain favourable circumstances, for the workers to win for themselves, through organised struggle, a higher standard of living. On the other hand it is possible for the standard to be beaten down to lower levels as, for example, appears to have occurred in the U.S.A. in the past 10 years or so. It must, however, be observed that any such raising or lowering represents a certain change in the relative strengths of the capitalists and workers, and is, therefore, not to be confused with the

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 94.]

## Marxism—The Philosophy of Action

"DIALECTICS, THE LOGIC OF MARXISM," by T. A. JACKSON (Lawrence & Wishart) 10/6

MARX in his early days was a profound student of philosophy, and proclaimed himself a follower of "that mighty thinker," Hegel, whose system of philosophy had as its central principle the dialectal conception of the universe. This conception is that everything, including human thought, reveals itself as in a process of being and becoming. But, to cut a long story short, how the being and becoming was effected in human thought and social relationships was a question upon which Marx took leave of Hegel, turning the latter's "dialectic right side up." Where Hegel thought the motion of all things to work through the unfolding of an "Idea," being and becoming from God-knows-where, Marx saw the movements of human society to arise from the action and interaction of man and external nature. There is, therefore, no "Idea" in the Hegelian sense, there are only ideas, and common, human ones at that. Marx applied the criterion of practice to philosophical speculation—"the question whether objective truth can be attributed to (attained by) human thinking is not a question of theory, but a practical question. In practice, man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the 'this sidedness' of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question." (Marx.)

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Reducing this to common phraseology, it means: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

Now we of the Socialist Party of Great Britain have always insisted that the teachings of Marx and Engels provide an indispensable foundation for working-class Socialist activity. The theories of Marx have been stated and re-stated by us almost *ad nauseam*, as well as *ad infinitum*. We have battled for the recognition of Marxism amidst abuse and misrepresentation, not to mention the boycott of silence concerning our existence maintained by the pseudo-Socialist, Communist "revolutionist," and everything "elsist" Press. But as Marx so aptly observed: "Time is the room of human development." The theories for which we have worked are now being studied and discussed with increasing vitality.

The causes leading to this need not detain us here to discuss. Suffice it to mention that it is a remarkable tribute to Marx and Engels that their theories are interpreted in the light of, not only the age in which they were written, but more forcibly in connection with the happenings of to-day. The volume before us is a "weighty" addition to the various works on

Marxism which have appeared in the last few years. In this case it is by one who claims to be an "out and out Marxist," who tells us his work is "an attempt to clear the ground for a better



and fuller appreciation of that which gives Marxism its living unity, namely, the Dialectal Materialist Method." But for whose benefit, may we enquire, is this attempt made to unravel the method of Marx?

The worker-student who comes fresh into the field of Marxian thought will find in this volume a veritable maze of terminology to drive him into bewilderment. In about 650 pages there are literally hundreds of quotations from the flower of the world's intellects. Besides this there are innumerable phrases appearing in inverted commas and brackets, whilst the exclamation marks are as pronounced as tombstones in a graveyard. From this aspect alone should have concentrated upon making it "readable." Obviously, if Marxism is to become a weapon in the struggle for working-class emancipation, it should be stated in a way that is within the grasp of those who have need of it. But one easily gathers from this book that Mr. Jackson has been little animated by the need of the enlightenment of "untutored workers." Rather does he seem to have contrived his effort in the spirit of the ever so clever boy who is ever so eager "to tell the class all about it."

Of course all this is what Mr. Jackson would call "swank." He wants people to read his book and for that reason alone should have concentrated upon making it "readable." Obviously, if Marxism is to become a weapon in the struggle for working-class emancipation, it should be stated in a way that is within the grasp of those who have need of it. But one easily gathers from this book that Mr. Jackson has been little animated by the need of the enlightenment of "untutored workers." Rather does he seem to have contrived his effort in the spirit of the ever so clever boy who is ever so eager "to tell the class all about it."

His habitual use of long-winded, involved and even flashy statements, together with his readiness to knock lumps (spots seem not to be big enough) off all and sundry, will hamper any student who may mistake this book for an easy guide to Marxism.

Much of what Mr. Jackson has written here is comprehensible only to those who have had the opportunity of years and years of study, and into the bargain have been free from necessity of earning their daily bread under capitalist supervision in the workshop.

We cannot hesitate to offer the following example from among many which could be given of what we have said above. Mr. Jackson is explaining Hegel's phrase "Negation of negation," and this is what we get: "The Hegelian method was 'pelmanised' for its followers in the 'sacramental formula' (as Marx called it): 'Negation of negation.' Both Marx and Engels used the phrase—it was an instance of their 'coquetting with Hegelian terminology'—with telling effect. Since the phrase is a scandal and abomination to all bourgeoisdom to this day, and

is made a chief count in the indictment against Marx by several of his recent critics, we may profitably give it a little attention.

"Terrifying though this phrase may sound, mystifying to the last degree as it becomes in the hands of an idealist, this formula is none the less capable of a simple and, what is more, an illuminating explanation. Light begins to break through the mystery as soon as it is seen (a) that it summarises the conclusion of a logical operation; (b) that it is preceded by a process whose formula is in turn that of Spinoza, 'All determination is Negation.'

"What does this phrase mean? What it says: that all distinguishing of things in thought is a de-term-ination, a setting of limits to that which the thing is. Or, otherwise stated, all distinguishing of things is an act of mentally separating a thing from that which it is not. Thus all 'determination,' which is particularisation, consists in 'negating' or breaking up an undifferentiated generalisation. Furthermore, the process of discriminating one particular thing from a general mass is simultaneously a process of distinguishing the counter-particularity of that from which it is distinguished. Hence (and it is here that Hegel's real contribution begins, all the foregoing being common to him and his predecessors)—hence a full comprehension of the thing involves comprehending it simultaneously in two opposite ways, namely, as distinct from and, at the same time, as one with that from which it is distinguished. Hence all logic consists in the performance with due circumspection of this operation of negating unity by resolving it into multiplicity (analysis) and re-creating it by distinguishing the unity persisting in the multiplicity (synthesis)."

One may gather from this why it was suggested that the study of philosophy is like looking in a dark room for a black cat that isn't there. The writings of Marx and Engels are in every way as clear as crystal compared with the above abracadabra.

However, having had our say so far, let us take Mr. Jackson as he is, as Cromwell preferred it, "Warts and all." In tracing the rise and development of Marxism he well takes as his starting point an examination of Marx's theses on the philosophy of Feuerbach, which we have reproduced from time to time in these columns. All students of Marx should avail themselves of a study of these theses, since they indicate and illuminate the passage through which Marx passed from Hegelianism on to the philosophy of Feuerbach and thence to Marx. Mr. Jackson illuminates the fundamental distinctions between the older materialism of Hobbes and Locke, etc., the idealisms of Berkeley and Kant, which culminated in Hegel, and the materialism of the Marxian

school of thought. If we allow for the drawbacks referred to previously, Mr. Jackson does this part of his work exceedingly well, and particularly so where he deals with the "Objective Roots of Religion." Marx laid it down that "the criticism of religion is the beginning of all criticism," but as Mr. Jackson ably points out, although the "beginning," it was by no means the end. In turn the criticism of religion involves a criticism of the legal-political-moral superstructure of human society as this arises from society's economic foundations. Many passages from the writings of Marx and Engels are given in support of this thesis. But even here, Mr. Jackson cannot restrain his kink for "scalping," and thus mars an otherwise excellent chapter by a piece of deliberate distortion. He quotes from Casey's booklet, "Method in Thinking," the following: "If we separate from men and things all thoughts of goodness, power, intelligence, perfection, life and such like, and add them together to form one thought of complete superiority in all matters, *this thought* is God. When we realise that thought is real and just as objective as anything else we have here!! the explanation!!! of why God is a real and very powerful influence!!!... If understanding were more general we should not have the silly quarrel between theists who take God on faith and the atheists who deny God also on faith!!! and agnostics who say they do not know one way or the other...."

"The idea of God is built up just like any other idea, and therefore we can understand God!!! and consequently we are able to explain Him...."

The italics and exclamation marks are all Mr. Jackson's, who describes Casey's statement as an attitude of "facing-both-ways-at-once." But Casey's meaning is obvious, whatever one may think of his method of presentation. He does not mean what Mr. Jackson would have us believe, as the statement which follows on from where Mr. Jackson left him "high and dry," shows.

Says Casey: "If after that any man wants to worship such a God it will be his own fault. Merely to deny God gets us no further, but to explain him is the best way, so far as serious argument is concerned, of clearing up all the nonsense associated with Him. We say nonsense, but it is not nonsense to those who trade on the faith in God, and in the name of God force their authority on their fellow-men, sometimes in sincere belief and sometimes with the utmost hypocrisy." We cannot think that Jackson is unaware of the fact that Casey is dealing with "God" as a concept, and not as an objective reality, independently existing outside the human mind. We suggest Mr. Jackson should hesitate next time he thinks of the "facing-both-ways" charge. When Mr. Jackson was speaking recently at a Church Hall at Hornsey on the subject of "Com-

munist and Christianity," he stated that "it was surely criminal to emphasise the disagreements of Communists and Christians when people all over the world clamoured for goodwill." "The common enemy is Fascism." (*Hornsey Journal*, February 21st, 1936.) Is this not facing-both-ways, or is it a variation of Low's two-headed ass?

However, when dealing with "The Dialectic of Revolution," Mr. Jackson exposes himself as being no more than an idolator of the Russian Bolshevik régime. He likewise exposes the fact that the mere possession of the dialectal concept is no guarantee that the correct standpoint is taken by the dialectarian. Whatever the Bolsheviks have done, or are doing, or are likely to do in the future, Mr. Jackson perceives in their activity the working out of the Dialectal Materialism of Marx. But he flattens himself out in the task of substantiation. He says, "That which was victorious in Russia in November, 1917, was neither a local nor a national force—but the revolutionary force of the world proletariat, which broke through the bourgeois defences just exactly at that point, because in that section the defences of the world-bourgeoisie were weakest." (Page 397.)

The revolutionary force of the world proletariat! As Jackson must realise, unless he, like most "Communists," sees the revolution everywhere, here and now in 1936 the revolutionary force of the world's working-class is practically negligible. How much more so was it in 1917? Those who bitterly remember the war-time days will recall the almost complete absence of any serious sign of activity to stop the war, let alone commence the social revolution. In Russia alone was there any serious indication to call a halt to the slaughter, and mixed up in that movement to end the war were the Bolsheviks. The "Revolution" came, the Bolsheviks came, but no Socialism. Not even the intense longing and hoping of Lenin for the revolt of the world's proletariat had any effect. The forces making for "Socialism" were actually subdued in Russia, firstly by the economic backwardness of that country and next by the capture of power by the very people who had been screaming "Socialism." The Bolshevik Government from its inception, and in order to maintain its dictatorship throughout, had to toe the line to capitalism. Stalin in one of his recent utterances flatly repudiated the notion of the Bolshevik interest in world revolution after 19 years of his party's rule.

The essential moves for Socialist revolution, which is totally different from a mere uprising to end a war, or dethrone a government, or what not, will take place when the workers understand and desire Socialism. And this Mr. Jackson evidently realises. He contends against the notion that it was Marx's theory that the idea of Socialism would arise "automatically in the heads



of each and every individual proletarian," and says further that "for the idea to arise in the first place, and to become general in the second place, an objective social reality must exist from which the idea has arisen. There must exist, and be felt to exist, a social problem for which a solution must be found—and it is under the promptings of the urgency of the problem as well as their cogency and applicability to the needs viewed in the light of practical everyday reality, that ideas spread and develop into 'forms of public opinion.'" Exactly, Mr. Jackson; but no such form of public opinion existed to any serious degree in the vast expanse of Russia in 1917 with Socialism as its objective. There are many other points made by Mr. Jackson about Russia, which we have refuted over and over again.

In concluding this review we repeat that, with those who are immersed in dialectics, and mistake the Marxian Dialectic for a sort of logic-chopping

apparatus for the "use of smart men only," there lies a source of danger to Socialist activity. The concepts of the unity of theory and practice and the unity of opposites might pass muster anywhere and in anything, but to square with the realisation of Socialism it will not do to take one step forward in Socialist theory and two steps backward, not to mention a whole flight, into capitalist practice as Lenin and the Bolsheviks have done. There are numerous other points we should like to have dealt with arising from this provocative, entertaining, polemical, philosophical, historical and generally sociological essay, but we must drop our pen for the present. To all students of Marx we suggest that they sample this work, but only after they have first studied Marx and Engels.

ROBERTUS.

P.S.—As I concluded this article, the news was broadcast that Russia desires a naval pact with Great Britain. The dialectic scores again.

## Here and There

MR. H. POLLITT has written a series of articles in the *Daily Worker* on Communist policy. In the last article, May 11th, he says:—

"The peoples want peace. They want to be shown the clear road to be able to keep peace. The working-class movement has the sacred duty of showing them . . . what road has to be taken. . . . Let the working-class movement of Great Britain lead the way to peace. It can do—it shall do!"

AND HOW?

"Forward, then, to the greatest Crusade for Peace this country has ever known:—

- For the defeat of the National Government;
- for helping in every way the German people to overthrow the Hitler Government, the Government that is the chief war incendiary in Europe to-day;
- for the expulsion of the Japanese invaders from China and for a democratic Japan;
- for the expulsion of the Italian plunderers from Abyssinia, and the liberation of the Italian people from Fascism;
- for a world front of workers and peasants and all friends of peace against the instigators of war."

If Mr. Pollitt ever gets the time to ponder on his inane slogans he might ask himself and try to explain how the working-class movement could effect the expulsion from Abyssinia of 250,000 Italians, armed with guns, tanks, aeroplanes and poison gas, without war. Having settled that problem he might also try to explain in what way the working class would benefit by the expulsion

of the armed forces of Italy from Abyssinia and of the Japanese from China.

Come, Mr. Pollitt, the *Daily Worker* will be read with interest for your reply!

### Thieves' Progress

Slave-ridden, barbaric, semi-feudal Abyssinia has been "annexed" by capitalist Italy. The annexation, inevitable otherwise, might have been prevented by the intervention on the side of Abyssinia of strong capitalist Powers like Great Britain and France. The intervention did not take place, despite the vociferous demands that it should by many capitalist interests, supported as usual by soft-headed Labour and Communist Party leaders. Italy's new Abyssinian Empire, situated as it is on the British sea route to India, and in a strategic position among British African colonies, gives Italy a vastly increased bargaining power with British capitalism. The conquest has doubtless caused intense concern to British interests. That the British Government did not intervene to prevent this possible threat to its interests and prestige suggests that they had hoped for a result less decisive—a compromise giving Italy a less dominating position, or that they had considered the cost too great and the possible consequences at the moment too grave. For it is certain that if British capitalism became involved in another war that smaller capitalist Powers would seek to embarrass her by throwing off her domination, by demanding concessions, and even, if the opportunity occurred, by grabbing part of her wealthy Empire.

It is indeed a hard world for capitalist coun-

tries that have the responsibility of owning enormous wealth.

### Capitalism's Health

"The disappointing thing to me about the Budget is that it reveals an altogether unpleasant healthiness about the capitalist system."

It must be discomfiting to Mr. Maxton to reflect that six years ago he made a dramatic forecast that the capitalist system would collapse within six months. He was wrong, as we pointed out then, and as events proved. He is now disappointed in capitalism's "unpleasant healthiness." That much he has learned. If Mr. Maxton had the ability he might, by study, understand the workings of the capitalist system: why, in times of crisis, it appears to be collapsing and at other times shows "unpleasant healthiness." It is more likely that Mr. Maxton will understand capitalism better and ultimately acquire Socialist understanding only as events force their lessons home to him. That is, in the same way that the mass of workers will acquire an understanding of Socialism.

### Postmen and Knights

The Annual Conference of the Union of Post Office Workers, held at Brighton, at its sitting on May 5th, had a minor breeze. Sir Walter Citrine, General Secretary of the T.U.C., who was a fraternal delegate, came very near to being refused a hearing. A resolution was moved to delete his name from the list of fraternal delegates. This drastic action was proposed because Sir (formerly Mister) Walter Citrine had accepted a knighthood. The voting was amazingly close. The resolution was defeated by 1,081 votes to 910. In explanation, lest it be inferred that the respectable postmen recognise the emptiness of titles and the futility of working men possessing them, the resolution was supported mainly on the ground that it was conferred by the National Government. The delegates supporting the resolution staged a walk-out when Sir Walter rose to speak. An awkward situation, through which, it may be assumed, the dignity of his title helped Sir Walter without undue embarrassment.

### Socialism versus Reforms

The Socialist argument that reforms have only a limited benefit for the working class is graphically supported by the following from the *News Chronicle* (March 12th, 1936):—

Sir John Orr's report on Malnutrition is no pleasant reading for a lazy afternoon; and it should dispel the belief which seems to be gaining currency in lazy circles that malnutrition is due to ignorance of food values rather than to poverty. It is easy for well-fed persons to accept such doctrines as the truth.

Proof, if proof be needed, that poverty is, in fact, the villain of the piece can be found in Stockton-on-

Tees, which boasts one of the best Medical Officers of Health in England.

In the last five years Stockton has re-housed nearly half its worst slum population in one of the country's best designed and spacious housing schemes.

Economy and efficiency have made possible a rent in this new district of barely one shilling per week per head more than was paid in the slums.

And in the last five years the only really noticeable difference between the slums and the new area has been a big increase in the death rate among those who have been better housed. The slum death rate remains the same.

That one shilling per week per head means, in fact, sufficient food to make the difference between life and death.

We oppose reformist policy on the grounds that reforms do not solve the working-class problem of poverty, even though reforms might have some immediate benefit. The reform dealt with above—better housing—would appear to be definitely harmful to the working class: the position being that health suffers and the death rate increases as more money is spent on rent and less is spent on food. And after a hundred years of reforms we have as much poverty and more reformers than ever.

H. W.

## New Premises Fund

Below is a further list of donations to the New Premises Fund, brought up to 18th May.

### DONATIONS TO NEW PREMISES FUND.

Already acknowledged—£156 0s. 10½d.; S. Allen, 5s.; C. Vivian, 15s. 3d.; A. McPhail, 5s.; Hamilton, 5s.; Grabbens, 4s.; Experanto, 2s. 6d.; E. J. Ridgeway, 2s. 9d.; H. McPherson, 10s.; B. J., 5s.; Dundee Branch, 5s.; A. J. F., 1s.; J. C., 8s.; Chiswick Branch, £3; Bob, 14s.; W. G., 1s.; J. C., 2s.; W. Todd, 2s.; A. McInnes, 10s.; S. J. A. H., 7s. 6d.; C. E. S., 2s.—S. P. Australia and Sydney Branch: H. F. Mills, L. E. Shearston, M. Edwards, C. W. Christie, H. F. Woodbridge, C. M. Quinlan, C. Honrigh, W. Hilder, J. Nugent, F. Richards, J. Green, F. T. Ward, £1 10s.; Victoria per E. S.—British Columbia: L. Brevis, \$10; C. Madden, \$15; J. E. Pilgrim, \$1; G. Laflin, \$1; J. Mildoon, \$1; W. Bennett, \$1; C. Luff, \$50; E. Simpson, \$1—W. McPherson, 5s.; Kitchen Ties, 15s.; A. McInnes, £1; Southend Branch, 4s.; S. S. G. Fund, £1; Kitchen Ties, 4s. 2d.; J. B., 2s. 6d.; J. W. S., 2s.; T. W. A., 7s. 6d.; J. Hill, 1s.; W. P. B., 1s.; L. L. of Y., 6d.

### DONATIONS TO GENERAL FUND.

C. McLean, 1s.; Battersea Branch, £5; F. J. H., £1; B. H. F., 2s. 6d.; Central Branch, £2; Minington, 7s. 6d.; Lib. Ion, 1s. 8d.; F. J. H., £1; A. E. O. P. F., 1s.

### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that Cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

## "The Socialist Party of Great Britain and Questions of the Day"

Deals with the founding of the Socialist Party, the Liberal, Tory, Labour and Communist parties and the I.L.P., the Russian Dictatorship, War, Trade Unions, Social Reforms etc.

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**EDITORIAL—continued from page 88.**

Labour Party notion that mere lower prices or lower taxes on foodstuffs, or the expenditure of Government money on social reforms, represent a corresponding gain to the workers. Unless the bargaining position of the workers has been improved for other reasons, these surface changes are followed by wage reductions which leave the workers where they were.

Let us now put the Budget into proper perspective, in relation to the capitalist class and the working class.

**Not Your Fight: Keep Out**

The capitalists do not live by engaging in wealth production themselves, but by living on the backs of the wealth producers. And they do this not by dishonest merchanting and shopkeeping, but by appropriating the proceeds of the workers' labour at the point of production. It has been officially estimated that in this country the workers in manufacture and mines produce each year goods to a value which (after allowing for all the expenses of production, raw materials, wages, etc.) leaves in the hands of the capitalists a surplus of about £100 per worker per annum, nearly £2 a week in respect of each worker employed. It is out of the fund formed in this way that the whole capitalist class lives—industrialists, landlords, and bankers. It is out of this fund that they have to provide the cost of the Government, which protects their property and their economic system.

The cost of the central Government is, roughly, £750 millions a year, with a further £250 millions for local Government, but a large part of this total of £1,000 millions (about one-third of it) is quite illusory. It is made up of interest on the National Debt and Local Government debts. In other words, the Government and local authorities collect from the capitalists in the form of rates and taxes money which flows back again to the capitalists (though not necessarily to the same individuals) in the form of interest on war loan, and Local Government loans.

Of the remaining expenditure something like £150 millions is spent on armaments to protect capitalist property and £100 millions on educating the workers in the knowledge required in capitalist industry. Other millions go to the Civil Service, the police and prison services.

The remaining expenditure, on war pensions, old-age pensions, poor relief, housing, health insurance, etc., is necessitated by the war-time and peace-time destruction of the workers' health and earning capacity, or is required to prevent destitution and consequent acute discontent and agitation inconvenient to the ruling class.

On the income side the Budget is a burden on the capitalists only, even if, to a superficial view,

parts of some taxes appear to be a burden on the workers. Without pressing the point unduly in the case of a few exceptionally placed individual workers, whose position is, or appears to be, an exception to this rule, the working class as a whole are not affected by the amount or nature of taxation. What the workers get out of capitalism—the amount and quantity of their food, clothing, accommodation, leisure, amusements, etc.—is determined not by prices or taxes but by capitalist pressure as a whole and the workers' powers of organised resistance to it. No juggling with taxes or prices or social reforms will alter the main position—that of a subject class trying to defend itself against a dominant class—or will free the workers from poverty and insecurity. Don't be misled by the movements to alter the amount or nature of taxes and Budget expenditure. The aim, or at any rate, the effect, is merely to remove a burden from one section of the capitalists and place it on another. It is a capitalist fight, so keep out. Concentrate, instead, on abolishing capitalism.

This is our Budget secret. Master it and you will be on the way to understanding the futility of reformism.

**“The Distribution of National Capital”**

By G. W. DANIELS AND H. CAMPION  
(Manchester University Press, 3s. 6d. 62 pages.)

**T**HIS book is based on the paper read before the Manchester Statistical Society on March 11th, referred to in our April issue. It is a detailed analysis of the ownership of capital in this country in comparison with the position before the War.

G. W. Daniels is Stanley Jevons Professor of Political Economy, and H. Campion is Lecturer in Economic Statistics at the University of Manchester. They are well qualified to write on this subject. Their analysis provides a shattering answer to influential but (on this subject) uninformed people like Sir Robert Kindersley, who recently wrote to the *News Chronicle* on the widely propagated but almost entirely mythical redistribution of ownership supposed to have taken place since the War.

Their conclusion (p. 62) is that:—

It cannot be said there has been any marked change in the distribution of capital in individual hands in England and Wales during the last 25 years.

Regarding the supposed big savings of the workers, the authors conclude, as a result of their own and other investigators' studies, that the amount is not the £3,000 million that has been

claimed, but less than one-third of that total. They find that the 17 or 17½ million persons, aged 25 and over, who own £100 or less, own altogether something between £500 million and £900 million or between £30 and £50 each! (p. 49).

These people represent about 77½ per cent. of the total population aged 25 and over (p. 32), but their property represents only a tiny fraction of the total property, between 3.6 per cent. and 6.1 per cent. (p. 51).

At the other end of the social scale:—

More than half the total capital in 1924-30 and 1911-18 was owned by persons with more than £5,000 each.—(P. 51.)

These people number about 370,000, less than 2 per cent. of the population aged over 25. They own on an average about £27,000 each, compared with the workers' average of £30 to £50.

The book is somewhat technical and will not make easy reading for those who are unfamiliar with statistical studies. It is a valuable addition to authoritative works useful to combat the propaganda which safeguards capitalism by telling the workers that things are changing of themselves, if only the workers will be patient.

A further useful contribution is a statement by Sir Leo Money, whose *Riches and Poverty* greatly helped Socialist propagandists before the War.

A review in *The Times Literary Supplement* pooh-poohed some statements about the inequality of income, saying that they were based on figures published in 1908 in Sir Leo Money's *Riches and Poverty*, and that this was “a ludicrously ante-diluvian date for an economic argument.”

Sir Leo Money promptly wrote a letter containing the following:—

“The lapse of time, unfortunately, has by no means made the figures of my *Riches and Poverty* ludicrous. My book said:—

Year by year, with the regularity of the seasons, about four thousand persons die leaving between them about £200,000,000 out of total estates declared to be worth about £300,000,000.

“After 26 years, the latest report of the Inland Revenue shows that, in 1933-34, estates valued at £524,000,000 were left at death by 134,000 people, and that a mere handful of them, 8,334, left as much as £348,000,000 of the aggregate £524,000,000!

“These are hard facts, which almost beggar argument. As the distribution of capital largely determines the distribution of income, it will be apparent that inequality still reigns.”

(*Times Literary Supplement*, March 14th.)

The defenders of capitalism who claim that inequality has disappeared or is diminishing have not the shadow of a case. H.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA**

Head Office and Headquarters of the Socialist Party in Canada, 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.

Will all those interested in the development of a revolutionary Socialist Party, and desirous of obtaining further information, write to the official Secretary, F. Neale, 179, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.?

Those requiring books or pamphlets on Socialism, or wishing to subscribe to the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, official organ of the S.P. of G.B. (subscription rates, 75 cents a year), write to Literature Agent, c/o F. Neale.

\* \* \* \* \*

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June 1	(No Meeting)	
8	“Rise and Fall of a Labour Leader”	A. KOHN
15	“What's the use of Dialectics?” (Open Discussion.)	Opener. C ROBERTUS
22	“The Bogy of Overpopulation”	C. JAMES
29	“Profits and Patent Medicines”	C. J. KILNER

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

**Notice to Correspondents**

Owing to pressure on space, several answers to correspondents have had to be left out of this issue. ED., COMM.



## Outdoor Propaganda Meetings

JUNE

### SUNDAYS

Cock Hotel, East Ham ... 8 p.m.  
Brockwell Park ... 6 p.m.  
Clapham Common ... 7 p.m.  
Regents Park ... 11.30 a.m.  
Finsbury Park ... 6 p.m.  
Victoria Park ... 5.30 p.m.  
Whipps Cross ... 8 p.m.  
Ridley Road, E. ... 8 p.m.  
Queens Road, Bayswater ... 8 p.m.  
Putney, Tooting Path ... 11.30 a.m.  
Forest Gate, (Sylvan Road, Upton Lane), Near "Princess Alice" ... 8 p.m.

### 7th

Lestor  
Wilmot  
Cash  
Wilmot  
Turner  
Grainger  
Berry V.  
Banks  
Walker  
Snelgrove

### 14th

Cash  
Grainger  
Hayden  
Lestor  
Kohn  
Robins  
Isbitsky  
Ambridge  
Manion  
Walker

### 21st

Grainger  
Jacobs  
Walker  
Kohn  
Wilmot  
Berry V.  
Cash  
Manion  
Ross  
Banks

### 28th

Goldstein  
Turner  
Banks  
Turner  
Grainger  
Isbitsky  
Hayden  
Berry V.  
Robins  
Wilmot

### SATURDAYS

Undine St., Tooting ... 8 p.m.  
Roper Street, Eltham ... 8 p.m.  
West Green Corner ... 8 p.m.

### 6th

Banks  
Cash  
Turner

### 13th

Manion  
Ambridge

### 20th

Hayden  
Wilmot  
Berry V.

### 27th

Reginald  
Banks

ALSO

### MONDAYS

Highbury Corner ... 8 p.m.  
Ilford Station ... 8 p.m.  
Rushcroft Road, Brixton ... 8 p.m.  
Ridley Road, Dalston, E. ... 8 p.m.

### WEDNESDAYS

Cock Hotel, East Ham ... 8 p.m.  
Avenue Road, Lewisham ... 8 p.m.  
Fulbourne Street, E. ... 8 p.m.  
Deanery Road, Stratford, E. ... 8 p.m.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from June 10th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding (Dues Sec.) "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Cafe, Peter Street. Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., I. Benjamin, at above address.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[Monthly, Twopence

*Ignorance . .  
never helped  
nor did . . .  
anybody any  
good.*

KARL MARX.

## DOES THE NAVY SAFEGUARD OUR DAILY BREAD?

**T**WO opinions about the Navy have been jostling for front place in the past six months. One is that the Navy is rotten: just a lot of old tin-cans waiting for an enterprising dictator to sink them. The dictator, the ex-Labour leader Mussolini, is supposed to have bawled the British fleet off the Western Mediterranean into an Eastern funk-hole, and to have assumed the mastery of the sea. The other opinion is that the fleet retired voluntarily, too proud to fight, or according to some crooked hidden plan of those who decide the foreign policy of the British capitalists.

Which of these is the truth we do not know. Probably the supermen who are in control do not know. Probably the naval experts who advise them, like the professional economists, are all at sixes and sevens, and able to provide every variety of contradictory opinion on demand. As for the theory of a cunning piece of double-dealing, perhaps it is true, as alleged by Continentals who have studied British diplomatic and Governmental

methods, that the reputation for cunning enjoyed abroad by the British ruling class is due to pure mischance. The benighted foreigners watch the elephantine blunderings of the British Cabinet and conclude that it must be an elaborate smoke-screen hiding deep-laid plans and plots, simply because it is unbelievable that Baldwin and Co. can really be as silly as they seem.

However, these are realms into which it is profitless for us to go. Instead, let us try to answer another question about the Navy.

### What the Navy does for the British Workers

What the Navy does for the British investors who have some £3,000 million invested abroad we know, but what do the workers get out of their masters' expensive little toy? Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, M.P., one of Mr. MacDonald's ex-Labour Party group, has answered the question. Mr. Lindsay is Civil Lord of the Admiralty and presumably knows all about fighting ships. Speaking in the House of Commons on May 28th, 1936, he told the M.P.s that he identified himself with Mr. Winston Churchill's statement, "the purpose of the Navy is to ensure the arrival of our daily bread." He went on to say that "the Admiralty programme was based on months of careful studies. They aimed to make the British Navy 100 per cent. efficient." (*Manchester Guardian*, May 29th, 1936.) This should give comfort to us all, the knowledge that the Navy is seeing to it that we are all rightly and adequately fed and that the gentlemen in control have been burning the midnight oil to ensure 100 per cent. efficiency. But not so fast. On turning over the pages of the same newspaper from which that piece

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of news was taken we find more news about our food. Dr. G. W. Theobald, of the British Post-Graduate Medical School, London, says that at least ten per cent. of our population has to be fed on a weekly budget of 4s. or less for each individual. (Dr. Theobald's proposal was not more steel for the Navy, but that "every school should instruct girls to take iron for one month in the year to prevent anæmia.") Another doctor, speaking at the joint conference of the Royal Institute of Public Health and the Institute of Hygiene, where Dr. Theobald made his speech, commented on the inadequate food of working-class mothers: "One finds mothers towards the end of the week living on bread and tea, and saving pennies to buy meat and pies for the boys." Dr. McGonigle and M. J. Kirby, in a recent authoritative study, "Poverty and Public Health," have shown that there are 20,000,000 people in this country who are too poor to be properly fed. Mr. Lloyd George, in a speech at the Central Hall, Westminster, on March 13th, 1936, added his testimony (*Daily Telegraph*, 14th March, 1936):—

We have it on the authority of men of science, who have devoted the whole of their lives to the study of this problem, that over 40 per cent. of our fellow-countrymen are inadequately fed in a land of exuberant plenty and abounding wealth.

There are still millions living in habitations that are unfit for human beings to dwell in, and side by side with these conditions we have statistical and revenue testimony as to the enormous fortunes and huge incomes enjoyed by a few.

We find then that if the Navy's job really is to "ensure the arrival of our daily bread," it falls down badly on the job. Or rather, it ensures that the working class get bread but very little else, for, according to the Medical Officer of Health for Chorley, tea and bread and butter forms seventy per cent. of the breakfast and tea meals of elementary school children in that town, "the term bread and butter" including "bread with margarine and bread dipped and fried in fat." (*News Chronicle*, June 13th, 1936.)

#### What the Navy is really for

Of course there is no need to elaborate the argument. The Navy does not and never did exist for the purpose imagined by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Lindsay. British capitalists might at one time, even if they cannot now, boast of being mistress of the seas, but it was not for the sake of British workers. The purpose of the Navy, as of the rest of the armed forces, is to defend capitalist investments at home and abroad against attacks from all quarters. Mr. Philip Jordan, in an article on "Empire Defence" (*News Chronicle*, June 12th, 1936), gives a reasonably accurate account of the reason why the Navy is engaged on keeping open the "pipe-lines" of British commerce:—

"These pipe-lines British naval strategy is concerned to preserve; for upon their unimpeded maintenance depends the ease with which

tribute and life flow into imperial Britain: gold and diamonds from South Africa, cotton from Egypt, spices from Ceylon, all treasure from India, tin and rubber from Malay, wool from Australasia; and from all and more of them interest on the loans with which British capitalists dowered them in early and late days." (Italics ours.)

Among the purposes of the armed forces is defending capitalist property against the working-class. It includes keeping the working-class in perpetual poverty, for only so can they be compelled to submit to exploitation for the good of the class which controls the political machinery, including the armed forces, and through it the accumulated wealth of the country.

What is the moral? An obvious one. The working class must themselves gain control of the machinery of Government and use it, including the Navy, for the purpose of ending capitalism. Then for the first time will the whole population be well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed.

H.

### New Premises Fund

The fund being raised to enable us to obtain larger and more convenient premises has now been open for more than a year and out of the sum aimed at, £300, we have so far received £182. We now urgently appeal for further donations to complete the fund at latest before the end of this year.

A list of donations up to 23rd June appears below.

Already acknowledged to 18th May—£171 3s. 6d.; Beckenham, 15s. 3d.; W. G., 1s.; L. M. A. Tickets, 10s.; Kitchen Ties, 3s. 4d.; J. C., 2s.; S. A. G., 5s.; J. K. Bloomsbury, 1s.; J. L. Bloomsbury, 1s.; J. R. G., 10s.; K. K., 10s.; W. H. P., £1 5s.; Chiswick Branch, £1; Tottenham, 4s. 2d.; East Ham (59), 4s.; J. R., 1s.; Lewisham, 12s. 6d.; Southend-on-Sea, 9s. 6d.; McPhail, 7s.; Manchester, 10s. 6d.; J. R. B., 6d.

#### Guarantee Fund—

Lewisham, 10s.; S. S., £1; K., 2s. 6d.; M. W. B., 10s.; A. F., 2s. 6d.; J. M. S., 5s.; Reg, 10s.; Grabber, 5s.; O. C. I., 10s.; Lewisham, 10s. 6d. TOTAL £181 16s. 3d.

#### DONATIONS TO GENERAL FUND

L. H., 17s. 6d.; Stanley, 7s.; Bloomsbury, £1; A. O. L., 2s. 6d.; Chiswick, £1; G. Edwards, 6d.; G. G., 2s. 6d.; W. H. S., 5s. 6d.; F. L. R., 2s. 6d.; Bloomsbury, £2; A. B. D., 7s. 6d.

### CORRECTION

#### Marxism—The Philosophy of Action

We regret that printer's errors were allowed to appear in the above review in the June SOCIALIST STANDARD. Dialectical was misspelled "dialectal," and dialectician appeared wrongly as "dialectarian."

ED. COMM.

## Here and There

### A Labour Party Trumpeter

MR. HERBERT MORRISON has been on a lecture tour in the United States of America. His object was to interest American audiences in the League of Nations and the policy of the British Labour Party. According to a report in the *Chicago Daily News* for April 24th, he said:—

I think there is misunderstanding about the British Labour Party, because you haven't had many visitors who represent average official opinion of this Party; more of your visitors have represented the extreme Left Wing of the Party or else the Independent Labour Party, which fights us. A British Labour Government would be well fitted to co-operate with your country whether it has a Republican or Democratic Government.

In effect, Mr. Morrison is saying that the Labour Party is "well fitted" to administer the capitalist system. As Socialists we do not need to be assured of this. We have said so for thirty years and more. Members and supporters of the Labour Party who have denied it, might, however, ponder the point again.

### I.L.P. Confusion and Hysteria

The above quotation from the *Chicago Daily News* was reproduced and unfavourably commented upon in the *New Leader* for May 29th, in a column headed "This is Capitalism." The I.L.P. boasted for many years that the Labour Party was its child. And a proud parent it was, too. But after thirty years of telling the workers that the Labour Party was "Socialist," the I.L.P. discovered that it was not. After taking so long to discover that the Labour Party is not a Socialist party, it could reasonably be assumed that it would not easily be forgotten. Let us see. The *New Leader* for May 22nd discusses the various proposals for a "United Front." It dismissed the idea of a "People's Front," such as exists in France and Spain, and which includes Liberals, as unsupportable because of its capital character. The I.L.P. argues for a "Workers' Front."

It is a united Working Class Front without any alliance or compromise with the Liberal and League capitalists.

It is a united Working Class Front between the Labour Party, the Co-operative Party, the I.L.P., and the Communist Party on a maximum agreed programme, with liberty of criticism and action beyond this programme.

It is common action between them on a Federal basis—an alliance of partners, not a rigid and unreal unity such as affiliation to the Labour Party would involve—in order to join forces against our common enemy the capitalist class and its political parties, and to realise common aims.

It will be noticed that the I.L.P. refuses to enter an "alliance or compromise with the Liberal and League capitalists," but will enter a "United Front" with the Labour Party (which it denounces as a capitalist party) "in order to join

forces against our common enemy, the capitalist class and its political parties, and to realise common aims." Join with capitalist parties to fight the capitalist class "to realise our common aims." Phew!

Again, in the *New Leader*, May 29th, Mr. John McGovern, M.P., in a letter to the Editor, complains that the Editor of the I.L.P. inter-party journal, *Controversy*, deleted a statement from an article by him (McGovern) that C. A. Smith, Fenner Brockway and C. L. R. James had stated that they "would bear arms and join the army if they were in Abyssinia . . . on behalf of the Emperor."

In his reply, C. A. Smith rises to noble heights: ". . . I now repeat that had I been in Abyssinia only conflicting duties or sheer cowardice would have prevented my fighting against the Fascist invaders." Twenty years ago the capitalist class persuaded millions of workers to fight in war for capitalist interests with the cry of "Defend poor little Belgium." To-day, Mr. C. A. Smith, a leader in the self-styled revolutionary I.L.P., has let himself into a similar trap. Poor Abyssinia! Drive out the Fascist invaders! For whom and for what end?

### Communists and the Labour Party

The Communist Party has applied to the Labour Party for affiliation. The correspondence relating to the application has been published in a penny pamphlet by the Communist Party. In one letter to the Secretary of the Labour Party, Mr. Pollitt says: "The Communist Party, if affiliated to the Labour Party, would certainly work, as many of your most energetic and sincere members are now working, to strengthen the policy and principles of the Labour Party for the achievement of Socialism, in accordance with the democratic principles provided in the Labour Party constitution, and would at the same time in the daily struggle loyally carry out all agreed upon decisions and mobilise all upon whom it has influence to take part."

Mr. Pollitt goes on to speak approvingly of the "People's Front" as it exists in France. He asks of the Secretary of the Labour Party: "Is it not a fact that the United Front has saved France from Fascism? Is it not a fact that so profound has this experience been that the United Front has broadened out into the People's Front, embracing large sections of the middle class and all who fear Fascism and war?"

Notice "embracing large sections of the middle classes." Even Mr. Pollitt, accustomed as he is to right-about-face changes in Communist Party policy, hesitates to point out that a People's Front on the French model means an alliance with the Liberals. Workers whose memories are not so con-



veniently short as Mr. Pollitt's will remember that not so long ago the Labour Party was referred to in communist journals as "traitorous," "Social-Fascist" and "war-mongering." The Labour Party has not forgotten, and there seems no prospect of a "United Front" just yet! It is an amusing thought, though, that we may yet see the erstwhile advocates of the violent overthrow of capitalism reproaching the Labour Party for being "too extreme." It is really very confusing.

### Poverty, Health and Housing

In a review of a book called *Poverty and Public Health*, by G. C. M'Gonigle and J. Kirby (Gollancz, 6s.), the *News Chronicle* (June 8th, 1936) gives some interesting figures on malnutrition and housing.

The close connection between wages and health can be seen from the following table:—

Wages 25s. to 35s., death rate 25.96 per 1,000.

" 35s. "	45s. "	" "	19.34 "	" "
" 45s. "	55s. "	" "	19.23 "	" "
" 55s. "	65s. "	" "	15.13 "	" "
" 65s. "	75s. "	" "	13.51 "	" "
" 75s. and up, "	" "	" "	11.52 "	" "

The death rate among workers whose wages are less than two pounds a week is therefore nearly twice as high as among workers whose wages are between three and four pounds a week.

Other interesting facts are mentioned. For example, an investigation carried out in Stockton revealed that a slum population, after being moved to a new housing estate, was showing a death rate of 33.55 per thousand instead of the expected rate of 8.12 per thousand. *That is to say, four times as many deaths as should have occurred were occurring among these ex-slum dwellers now living under "ideal" conditions.* The plight of unemployed workers on new housing estates is particularly appalling. On one such estate it was found that the amount of money available for four was 2s. 10½d. a week per man. Contrast this with the cost of the British Medical Association's minimum diet, which in 1932 was 4s. 10½d., and which to-day, Dr. M'Gonigle says, is 7s. Our reformers, if they face these awkward facts at all, will doubtless advocate more reforms; reforms catch votes anyway.

### Wage-Slaves and Health

*Labour Management* for February has an interesting article called "One-Day Absenteeism," by Dr. Garland, the medical officer at a large factory which employs thousands of women workers. The doctor argues for greater tolerance for the worker who takes an occasional day off from work. The occasional day off would have a "tonic" and "stimulating" effect on return to work. Workers at the factory where Dr. Garland is employed are shut out for the day, and lose the

day's wages, if they are not within the factory gates when the hooter blows. On the other hand, if the worker is away on account of sickness for one day or more, she (or he) does not lose her wages. The result is, according to Dr. Garland, that many workers who are absent because of being shut out in the morning, produce medical certificates to explain their absence for the day. Some of these certificates are for complaints that would lay the average person low for several weeks. The panel doctor in working-class districts apparently cannot afford to risk unpopularity by refusing certificates. His income from medical certificates, at one shilling each, even on a small panel of only 1,000 patients, means an addition to his income, according to Dr. Garland, of probably one hundred pounds a year. On the other hand, says the doctor, "The average worker is rarely feeling so fit and sound that he or she hasn't an odd pain or ache somewhere that can be magnified into gastritis, enteritis, tonsillitis, or some other 'itis' . . . ."

A curious mix-up which reveals how dependent is the position of the medical practitioner and how near many workers are to working no longer in this life.

### Changes in Russia

The U.S.S.R. is introducing a parliamentary régime, or at least some of it. The much-vaunted Soviet system of "pure proletarian democracy" is to be replaced by a parliamentary form of government, which, until recently, was looked upon with withering and pitying contempt by the fervent communist. There are to be two chambers, direct voting, the abolition of plural votes (the town workers, under the Soviet constitution, had proportionately more votes than the peasants), the secret ballot, and much of the paraphernalia of western parliamentary government. Any organised group of citizens, we are told, will be able to include names in the list of candidates for parliamentary seats. Louis Fischer tells us in *Reynolds News* (May 31st, 1936), "The new Constitution contains numerous provisions sensational in their significance. For instance, an interesting declaration will be made about private property."

That declaration should be interesting.

Something else is interesting too. The Russian Government is seeking pacts and alliances with the western parliamentary countries. Shall we yet see another "War to Save Democracy"?

### The Passing of the Crisis

The Ministry of Labour returns issued at the end of May make interesting reading. The number of people at work reached the figure of 10,831,000, which is the highest in the history of unemployed insurance, and excludes the recent inclusion of agricultural workers in unemployment

insurance. The number of unemployed was 1,703,941, as against nearly three million, three or four years ago. The facts are significant. Capitalism, once having reached the lowest pitch in the slump, recovered, and is now, once again, going through a period of expansion. There is nothing new in this; it has been the course in every industrial crisis for the past one hundred and fifty years. The pendulum in capitalist production having swung back must, by its very nature, swing forward again. But where are the shoddy economists, capitalist and self-styled Socialist alike, who only yesterday were telling the world that the end of the capitalist system was at hand? Have they relegated the end to an uncertain future date, as the Christians have the second coming of Christ? The chances are that if the workers allow capitalism to continue long enough to have another crisis they will be prophesying as wrongly, dismally and noisily as ever.

It is curious how events can upset flimsy minds. The *New Leader* published articles about eight years ago eulogising American mass production methods. Henry Ford, we were told, had shown Marx to be wrong. The *New Leader* has since discovered many new "lines." Others talked glibly of the crisis which had lasted since the last war—the mere fact of there being unemployment continuously since then was evidence enough, for them, of a continuous crisis. A little knowledge would show how capitalism really works. The recurring periods of depression and expansion, with the consequent increase and decrease in unemployment, are the very essence of capitalism. These in themselves will not bring it to an end. This will only be done when the workers understand that the appalling poverty and insecurity which exist side by side with immense wealth

in periods of depression and expansion alike, can be abolished by the social ownership of the means of life.

### The Passing of a Labour Leader

Bruce Clavering has an article in the *Sunday Referee* (May 24th, 1936), about the life of J. H. Thomas. Certain facts stand out and emphasise how useful he has been to the capitalist class. In 1911, the article says, "the railwaymen wanted to strike. Thomas saw Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer. He launched an impassioned appeal, but Lloyd George was unmoved. 'I, too, am a Welshman,' said L.G."

"Then the Chancellor made his own appeal. He pointed out that the Kaiser had issued a virtual ultimatum over Morocco, banking on the trouble in England keeping Britain's hands tied. Thomas responded to the appeal and called off the strike."

"During the war he swelled the army with more recruits than almost any other single man. As an Englishman he was a patriot . . . he achieved the best for his country and for himself."

Trotsky's verdict on Thomas was, "This incredible lackey."

Whether J. H. Thomas was sincere, insincere, rogue or fool does not interest us. He served the master-class faithfully and well, and in doing so was supported enthusiastically by the railway workers. His usefulness to the master-class and, to some extent, his popularity with them, was because he could command an enormous working-class following.

His life aptly illustrates the perils for the working-class in "leadership" and the need for the working-class to have knowledge of Socialist principles.

H. W.

## Spotlights on Capitalism

### China—Scene of the Next War?

NOW that the whole of Africa has been parcelled out, there remain very few areas of the world's surface which are not subject to the political domination of advanced capitalist countries. China, however, is one of them, and so we find the birds of prey gathered around for the final picking. The one secure source of revenue in China is the Customs, and the *Daily Telegraph* mentions (May 14th, 1936), that they are the one point of economic security for Chinese loans, which are largely held by British capitalists. The Japs, however, have established a demilitarised zone in the north of China, where Chinese troops are not allowed to penetrate, and set up a local Government, known as the "Independent East Hopei Anti-Communist Autonomous Council." As a result of this, they are able to obstruct the Chinese Customs in such a way that goods can be brought

across the Great Wall of China, or landed on the coast, either duty-free or on payment of only a quarter of the normal duties. This naturally diverts goods from such ports as Shanghai, where full duties have to be paid, and so the amount of both trade and duties at these ports declines, and the actual loss to the revenue has amounted in one week alone to as much as £120,000. As the interest on the loans has hitherto taken "only" one-fifth of the Customs dues, there is still ample cover for the service of the loans. Nevertheless, the bondholders are very much upset, and so the Governments of both Great Britain and the United States have made strong official representations in Tokio.

For nearly a hundred years now, the capitalist powers have been nibbling at China; one of the most notorious occasions was the Opium Wars, fought with the object of forcing the Chinese to buy Indian opium—a harmful drug which they



were quite capable of producing themselves. Twice have British troops marched on Pekin, and as long ago as 1860 they burnt the magnificent Imperial Palace, just outside Pekin, to the ground. The French pinched Annam and Tongking—once Chinese provinces, Japan long ago stole Taiwan, and more recently Korea, whilst her present intrigues are setting the teeth of the other capitalist powers on edge. Great Britain holds Hong Kong, whilst land in the vicinity has been obtained for fortification purposes. At every available opportunity the Chinese have been forced to agree to the opening of certain of their ports—called "treaty ports"—to foreign trade, and these even extend to the interior of China up to the limit of navigability of the Yang-tze-Kiang. Modern internal transport is now almost entirely in foreign hands. The majority of the railways are owned by British capitalists, whilst in the latest sphere—that of aviation—a new scramble has commenced. Here the British are behind—due doubtless to the British Government's present embargo on loans to foreign Governments and companies—and so we find the more important towns in this vast country—16 times the size of the British Isles—linked by a network of regular services, the most important being the American (China National Aviation Corporation), whilst the Germans have not been slow and their Eurasia Aviation Corporation flies from Shanghai to Hanchow and from Pekin to Canton. Chinese capitalism is, however, fast developing, and so we find the national South-Western Aviation Corporation operating American machines from Canton to Hangchow and Pakhoi in the south-western extremity, and even now a dispute has arisen with the French and American lines over the carriage of mails.

Those who watch for the next war may well turn their eyes to China.

### Beauty in the Stores

F. W. Woolworth & Co., Ltd., who last year made a profit of over £5,000,000, believe in leaving no stone unturned to increase their turnover, and so we find them issuing *The New Bond*. Unlike Chinese bonds, which produce a revenue for the purchaser, this "Bond" costs twopence and is designed to benefit the seller, rather than the buyer. The buyers are Woolworths' girl slaves, and the purchase of *The New Bond* is quite optional. We understand, however, that it is a brave girl who would refuse to buy. Like all "house" publications of this nature, the object is to produce a "team spirit" amongst the employees and to make them feel that they are at one with the firm.

An issue before us contains a beauty chat—"Our Beauty Chat" it is called, and we read—

"It is the discreet touch of Rouge and Lipstick that makes or mars a face. The

lighter shades of Rouge, such as Orange or Cherry, make your skin appear clearer—eyes brighter; but should you have blue-black hair and brown eyes, a slightly darker shade is necessary, such as Rosée."

Concluding, they say—"We shall recommend the well-known cosmetics which can be obtained at 'your' Store, so let us vote for a *Bigger, Brighter, Beauty Movement!*"

And, of course, Bigger and Better dividends. In return the firm will give the employees a paltry Christmas box and a vote of thanks!

R. M.

## Why Not Join the Labour Party?

The following letter urges the S.P.G.B. to join the Labour Party:—

To the Editor, THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Much as I appreciate THE STANDARD because of its Socialist uplift, I cannot jump the hurdles by switching over to the S.P.G.B. A member of the Labour Party because of its basic Socialism, yet, I recognise, like all associations, it is but human, and it is human to err within the capitalist system of life. I believe in Socialism, but, as a business man I am compelled to accommodate myself to capitalist methods, otherwise I should have to present myself to the P.A.C. The majority of trade unionists are just selfish individualists, much more selfish than "bloated capitalists," but primary fault is not theirs, neither is it mine because I have to live by capitalist methods. The entire fault lies in the system of life to which we are subordinate. It might be we could destroy it, or attempt to destroy it, in the same way as did the Russians (all praise to them), but it is obvious that cannot be. Tradition and due order is in our blood, and we cannot escape. If the British Communists have failed so dismally—as they have—in converting us, what chance has the S.G.P.B. in overturning "the system"? You will admit that your procedure up to now is gradualist. The probability is that, for many years you will be engaged in converting the people. When you have done this are you confident by political machinery of overturning capitalism? Do you calculate on the bankers, money changers and industrial chiefs sitting down quietly while you are putting them in their proper places? Has it ever occurred to you that they might provoke a bloody revolution? The Labour Party, with all its faults, has to keep in step with the people, and they are intensely gradualist. Even the victims of the social order have accommodated themselves to the dole life, and would shudder at the idea of creasing a policeman's helmet. Why look to the Labour Party to adopt mock heroics? Let all the Left sections affiliate with the Labour Party. If they alone can see the light their place is inside so that their light may shine before men. My own mentality is very much on the militant side, but I would hesitate very long before being practically militant. Very few would follow me into the shambles! The larger number would look on, especially trade unionists, and if I failed, like Christ in His appearance before the judges, they would desert me and fly for their lives. I know, because I have had some. A "united front" is only a pious platitude. Trade Unionism, because of its inherent individual and collective selfishness arising from a capitalist mentality, rejects any unified vision, hence the best of two worlds is enjoyed. And the Socialist, almost in despair, keeps trudging along

beseeching to be saved from his friends such as Knighted Trade Unionists, O.B.E.'s and "Socialist" peers.—Yours,

NORMAN V. REEVES.

Bangor, Co. Down.

Reply.

Mr. Reeves begins his letter by saying that he is reluctant to jump the hurdle which separates the Labour Party from the S.P.G.B. He then airily leaps across another gigantic hurdle as if it didn't exist at all, dismissing the case against the Labour Party with a light reference to "its basic Socialism," which, he thinks, is merely marred by a human tendency to err. This is the point at which Mr. Reeves should pause and begin his examination of the question. His assumption of a "basically Socialist" Labour Party is not warranted. The Labour Party's programme of replacing shareholding in joint-stock companies by bond-holding in Public Utility Corporations is not Socialism, but capitalism. It leaves every important feature of capitalism untouched. Socialists are not supporters of it, but opponents.

Having put the matter in correct perspective, let us now examine the rest of the letter.

Mr. Reeves references to his method of living, and to the "selfish individualism" of the Trade Unionist, are two sides of the same medal, capitalism. Conflict between the classes is its essence and will continue until capitalism is abolished. Socialists are well aware of this and have always realised the necessity for the Socialist movement to have a basis very different from that of the Trade Unions. We do not use the method of dividing the workers according to their occupation, but of uniting all who are Socialists.

The next assumption made in our correspondent's letter is that the Russians have abolished capitalism. This is like the earlier statement about the Labour Party—quite unfounded. Both of them possibly arise from a lack of clearness on Mr. Reeves' part about the nature of capitalism and Socialism.

Mr. Reeves in his innocence (or is it guile?) asks if it has ever occurred to us that the capitalists might provoke a bloody revolution after a Socialist working class has gained control of the political machinery. We can but answer with a similar question. Has it ever occurred to Mr. Reeves that, if a minority tried to provoke a bloody revolution against the politically organised majority which has control of the political machinery, including the armed forces, that rebel minority might get very badly hurt?

The rest of Mr. Reeves' letter lumps together a number of contradictory ideas, which need sorting out. He presents us with the alternatives either of being in the Labour Party or of trying to lead the workers "into the shambles." We are opposed to both. The task of spreading knowledge of Socialism, and of organising for the con-

quest of power has nothing in common with the stupid policy of leading non-Socialist masses into civil war. (On this point may we refer our correspondent to our Declaration of Principles?) On the other hand, our alternative to suicidal armed revolt is not the Labour Party policy of minor reforms of capitalism, but the quite different policy of organising for the conquest of power to achieve Socialism. In passing it may be pointed out that it is Labour Party gradualism which includes dragooning the workers into the shambles of capitalist war.

The attempt to whitewash the Labour Party by saying that "it has to keep in step with the people," is the stock argument of every purveyor of shoddy goods, quack medicines, puerile entertainments, and so on. What Mr. Reeves has got to explain is how the workers would ever cease to be capitalist-minded if every Socialist were to enrol under the Labour Party banner and spend his time (as he would have to do) defending and explaining pettifogging reforms of capitalism. The Prohibitionists who at one time dominated U.S.A., showed far more sense of reality than does Mr. Reeves in this matter. If they had followed the advice he gives us they would not have organised and fought for prohibition, or attacked liquor and the liquor trade, but would have enrolled in Pro-Liquor Leagues, advocating merely that alcohol should be diluted by the addition of tiny quantities of water. Instead, they attacked alcohol in all its forms, fought for what they wanted, and concentrated on winning over the population to their point of view.

If the S.P.G.B. were to apply for affiliation with the Labour Party (assuming that the application were accepted at all) we would have to drop our distinctive characteristic, our Socialist principles, in order to preach the basically non-Socialist doctrines of the Labour Party. The last sentence of the letter gives a fairly clinching argument against submerging Socialism in the Labour Party. It is only because the S.P.G.B. remains outside that it escapes having to try to defend the "Knighted Trade Unionists, O.B.E.s, and 'Socialist' Peers." They are Mr. Reeves' political associates, not ours.

ED., COMM.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JULY,



1936

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All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## Do Budget Leakages Matter?

THOSE who measure events by the amount of space devoted to them in the daily newspapers will have supposed that the tribunal on the giving away of Budget secrets was of supreme importance. Day by day, spread over whole pages, were reports of how our industrious propertied class gamble on horses, and speculate on stocks, shares and commodity prices, to the tune of thousands of pounds, without anybody objecting. It is not for these luxurious parasites, but for the workers that the ruling class institute organisations with highly paid staffs preaching thrift, economy and sobriety. The Budget enquiry tribunal was not concerned with speculation itself, but with the complaint that Budget secrets, contrary to the law, were communicated to speculators so that they could profit by having information about income tax and tea duties before it was published.

We say that the whole affair did not matter one jot to nine-tenths of the population. They had no interest at stake, and would not be affected, directly or indirectly in any way at all. Not that it was of no importance to anyone, but that the only people affected were the ruling class, not the ruled. Any kind of organisation has to keep within bounds the extent to which an individual may be allowed to exploit his position for his own ends.

The S.P.G.B. provides no career for any individual, but some organisations, the capitalist political parties, for example, normally allow their political leaders to use the party machine as a means of carving out a career full of honours and wealth. Yet even they could not tolerate such an attitude beyond more or less clearly understood limits. Much more than must this be true of the Government, the executive committee of the ruling class. The Cabinet, representing the outlook of the capitalist majority in Parliament is the servant of a minority of the population, the minority which owns and controls the resources of the country to the exclusion of the mass of the population. This state of affairs will continue until the workers cease sending defenders of capitalism to Parliament.

The Government then represents the collective interests of the capitalist class. The principal part of its task is to keep the propertyless working class from challenging the position of the exploiting class. The workers must, in other words, be fobbed off with promises, bemused with fine-sounding, but empty, phrases, bought off with petty concessions, and—if everything else fails—beaten down by force in the name of the law. What, then, is the first qualification of the politician who wants to be useful to the ruling class? Obviously it is that he shall have the confidence of the workers or at least of a large number of them. He must be popular. Only so can he misdirect the sheep on behalf of the wolves, who are his paymasters. Like the quack doctor, he must have patter. He must speak the language of the factory and market-place. He must be able to dress up his capitalist nostrums in phraseology which makes them look like the real thing for the workers. That is why the ruling class all over the world has seen the necessity for employing ex-Labour leaders and others reputed (though falsely) to have been Socialists.

As with the man so with the institution. The politician and the Cabinet must be trusted and respected. No breath of suspicion of personal self-seeking must be allowed to blow on them. In order to serve most effectively as cover for the brutal methods of factory exploitation and the tortuous ways of finance, the political institutions must stand forth as beacons of purity and unselfishness.

That is all there is to it. The affair was of concern to the ruling class, and to them alone.

### INDEX TO "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

A printed Index for volume 31 (16 months ended December, 1935) is on sale, price 2d. (post free 2½d.). Order from Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or nearest branch.

Copies of the Index for volumes 29 and 30 are also on sale.

## The Menace of Aerial Warfare

(The following article contains a very full examination of the effects of aerial bombing on large centres of population. This writer is not yet a member of the party, but in view of the present importance of the subject, and the support the information gives to the Socialist attitude to war, we have decided in this instance to suspend our rule against including articles by non-members.

There may perhaps be some exaggeration of the probable effects of modern warfare, but on this the reader can form his own judgment from the facts set down. One thing is certain—the effects of another war on a large scale, with the weapons now available, hardly bear thinking about.

ED. COMM.)

### Dye Factories as "Merchants of Death."

Prior to 1914 the I.G. (Interessen Gemeinschaft) possessed a virtual monopoly of the world's dyestuffs industry. In other countries the industry was in a crude and embryo stage of development. To the general reader it may seem a long way from the manufacturer of dyes to the "merchant of death"—so far, indeed, that this industry has not yet figured, as it deserves, in any of the recent enquiries into the arms traffic. It must remain undisputed, however, that all the motives of the manufacturer of guns, shells, aeroplanes and tanks, in keeping war to the forefront as an instrument of policy, must apply with equal force to the manufacturer of dyestuffs.

The next war will find the Yorkshire dye factories the most important manufacturers of weapons of offence in England.

When considering all the information made available after the last War had ended, it seems certain that the I.G. played the major part in prolonging the German resistance and, furthermore, had the strategic advantages of this enormous plant been fully realised, the War would have terminated in a German victory by the end of 1915. That she did not understand is now history.

When the first shock of surprise was over, and the immense advantage gained by the German's use of chlorine was not followed up, the manufacture of poison gas was started in England and France, and it was realised that the pre-War monopoly of the dye industry was making possible the large-scale use of poison gas by the German Army.

Dye factories can be changed over to the production of war gases in a very short time. Indeed, most of the gases have a legitimate industrial use in times of peace. It is for the latter reason that it will always be impossible to disarm, so far as gas is concerned.

Before the last War the dye industry was practically non-existent in England and France, and when it became necessary to manufac-

ture mustard gas (dichlorethyl-sulphide) on a scale suitable to the requirements of modern warfare, new plant had to be erected, which, in many respects, was identical with the normal aniline dye

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



plants. It was not until late in the War, after many failures and many casualties, that production was commenced, but, by the Armistice, it was possible for the Allies to boast that they were in a position to "drown the Germans in mustard gas." If there had been a well-developed dye industry in England or France, the time required to start production could have been reduced by perhaps as much as 95 per cent.

The importance of the dye industry was realised by England during the Great War by reason of these costly and laborious experiments in gas-production, and, in 1919, the import of dyes was prohibited, except under licence from the Board of Trade. That this order was illegal, having regard to the law at that time, led, in 1920, to the Dyestuffs (Import Regulations) Act, which became operative in January, 1921, whereby the import of dyestuffs and intermediates was totally prohibited for ten years except under Government licence. About the same time France, the U.S.A. and Italy created high import duties to foster the development of the industry.

At the close of the year 1918, the world's capacity to produce dyestuffs was double that of 1914, the figures standing at 300,000 tons.

The following tabulation of the annual production figures for 1929, of the principal manufacturing countries, is of interest:

Germany (tons)	72,000
U.S.A. ....	38,000
France ....	16,000
England ....	15,000

It will be seen that, at this time, the combined production of the three latter countries did not equal that of Germany. The next in order is the U.S.A., with 38,000 tons, and it is significant that the menace of chemical warfare has been realised more fully in the U.S.A. than in any other country, with the exception of Germany. The U.S.A., in addition to encouraging the manufacture of dyestuffs, possess a large factory (the largest of its kind in the world) at Edgewood, devoted to the manufacture of all types of poisonous gases and equipment.

In 1926 the Imperial Chemical Industries (I.C.I.) was formed with a capital of £65,000,000 to take over and co-ordinate the activities of Brunner Mond & Co., Ltd., Nobel Industries, Ltd. (manufacturers, among other things, of explosives), United Alkali Co., Ltd., British Dyestuffs Corporation, and a good many others. The ramifications of this huge combine are extensive, but largely unknown. The merger certainly has had the effect of unifying the potential producers of poison gas with the heavy chemical and high-explosives industry.

Nothing is more certain than that we have here a huge plant that could be mobilised at a moment's notice for the production of war material, and

would make profit by the prosecution of war. Therefore, even in the absence of proof, the I.C.I. must be suspected, as must every other potential producer of war material on a large scale, of favouring war as a means of settling the international disputes of capitalists.

It cannot be denied that the chemical industry is of enormous benefit to man, but it is also his potential destroyer. Explosives are necessary to human progress, but the I.C.I. is not organised to help human progress.

For my own part I do not think that there is anything particularly dishonourable in the activities of armament makers in general, or this side of the I.C.I.'s business in particular, because they are merely working within the framework of a system or social organisation that determines their business methods. I do not intend this to be an apologia for armourers, but it is indisputable that, during the last year or two, they have been made scape-goats for evils inherent in the profit system, and my purpose is to draw attention to the wider issues involved.

Shortly after the War the I.G. concluded price-controlling agreements with the dye factories of France, Russia and Italy. It is more than possible that there has been some exchange of personnel and formulæ. The I.C.I. also hold large blocks of shares in the I.G.

Even a substance so innocent as beet-sugar, the manufacture of which is subsidised by the Government, can be used as the means of producing supplies of glycerine, alcohol, acetone and hydrocyanic acid. Alcohol is a base for the manufacture of cordite, which probably explains what has been a very unprofitable subsidy.

Chlorine, used as a bleach for fabrics, is a war gas that has been largely superseded, but combined with so common a gas as carbon monoxide, it becomes phosgene, the deadliest of the non-persistent lung-irritants, with the power of corroding metals.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that profits can be made in the chemical industry from war, and the profit system being what it is, the industry's motives must be suspect.

### The Aeroplane

It is well for the man in the street to realise that there is no power on earth that can prevent him from being bombed. Whatever people may tell him, the bomber will always get through. The only defence is in offence, which means that you have got to kill women and children more quickly than the enemy if you want to save yourselves.—Stanley Baldwin.

Fighting in the air on a large scale only takes place by accident or by mutual consent.—Air-Marshall Sir R. Brooke-Popham.

CREATE A NEW WINGED ARMY OF LONG-RANGE BRITISH BOMBERS TO SMASH THE FOREIGN HORNETS IN THEIR NESTS.—Hands Off Britain Air Defence League.

The last quotation is the only answer that has

so far been evolved by the present system to the threat of the first two.

The development of the aeroplane since the close of the Great War has been rapid.

Within the last few years we have seen non-stop flights of over 4,000 miles; Australia reached in a little over three days; the Dornier DO X and Soviet aeroplanes to carry over one hundred passengers; aeroplanes annihilating conceptions of space and time remaining to us from quieter days. But we have not yet seen the aeroplane as the destroyer of cities and the slaughterer of millions. Yet, at the present time, this power could be demonstrated at almost any moment. Certainly within a few days.

Unless the people, on whom, ultimately, the power of governments depend, stop thinking in terms of war and think in terms of mass extermination, unless they can force the governments of the world to do something which, so far, has been found impossible, by reason of inordinate self-interest, to do—internationalise civil and military air-fleets, then the present civilisation will become a closed chapter in the history of man's struggle against barbarism. The collapse that would immediately and inevitably follow the commencement of another war between industrialised countries would be bloodier—more destructive of human life and welfare—than ever before in man's short history.

Knowing this, Lord Londonderry boasted in the House of Lords (in May, 1935) that he "Had the utmost difficulty, *amid the public outcry*, in preserving the use of the bombing aeroplane, even on the frontiers of the Middle East and India." It seems as if Lord Londonderry wishes to immolate the population of our large cities for the convenience of the Indian Army and it is not surprising, therefore, that the Prime Minister should have taken the first possible opportunity to sacrifice him to political expediency.

The standard bomber now in use has an out-and-home range of about 1,000/1,500 miles. Greater range can be attained by substituting extra supplies of petrol for part of the bomb load. The average load is two tons of bombs, in addition to personnel and protective weapons. Fifty tons, a load for twenty-five such aeroplanes, is the quantity necessary, according to the Earl of Halsbury, to destroy every man, woman and child in the London area.

"Mustard gas," he says, "is the most deadly of known gases. In an area, say, Richmond to Barking and from Finchley to Streatham, an effective lethal dose would be only forty-two tons. In twelve hours every man, woman and child in that area might fail to live."

"Fail to live" should be read "subjected to an agonising death." I am sure that the Earl of Halsbury knows sufficient about the physiological

effects of mustard-gas not to object to this trifling emendation.

In December, 1928, Brigadier-General Crozier, writing in the *Times*, said:—

"During the Great War 380 tons of bombs were dropped in and around London. That quantity could now be delivered in less than twelve hours."

Although this is quite bad enough, I question the General's figures. Three hundred and eighty tons is a load for about 200 bombers. I suggest that almost any country within striking distance of London could and would detach a good many more bombers from their air fleet for the important purpose of destroying the city, and could do this without appreciably weakening it. In addition, the large night-flying commercial machine would be very suitable for distributing mustard-gas and lewisite in large quantities. These machines have a lift of from three to six tons, and would require very little structural alteration. Normally they have a low ceiling and a slow speed, but this is not a serious handicap to night bombing, especially if the weather is cloudy.

Air manoeuvres have proved time and again that bombing aeroplanes can gain position over London as and when they like; that they can destroy between dusk and dawn nearly seven million people—almost as many as were killed on the Western Front between 1914 and 1918.

Let me draw a little picture. Towards the end of an evening in 1915 I was sitting in an armchair, reading, when, without warning, a terrific explosion shook the house and blew the window glass into the room. I knew at once that this was an air-raid, the first of the airships to reach London. There were several more explosions followed by silence. Obeying my primary impulse I ran for the cellar, which was an extremely flimsy affair, unlikely to offer much protection, and I knew that the bombs had fallen very close. In the morning I set out to see the damage, and found that, two streets away, most of the houses had been destroyed. I was fortunate enough to see the road before it was closed to the public, and to see for myself the aftermath of an air-raid that was, in relation to the destructive possibilities of modern armament, as a bow-and-arrow to a fifteen-inch gun. The fronts of several houses had been blown out. A bedstead stuck out of one at a sickening angle, the iron contorted into bizarre shapes by the violence of the explosion. The road was covered with debris and rubble, and the surface was gashed and torn. A young man had said "good-night!" to his fiancée, and crossed the road. When I saw the place the body had been removed, but his brains remained as a patch on the wall. I heard, subsequently, that the inquest verdict was "Murder against the Kaiser," an interesting example of war mentality, but of very little use to the dead. L. G. SAVAGE.

(To be continued.)



## Notes by the Way

### Another Communist Travesty of Socialism A Flaw in the Russian Constitution

THE *Daily Worker* of June 16th published in full the new Constitution of Soviet Russia. It is a lengthy document containing much that will interest those who wish to follow developments in that country. Two small paragraphs, however, will tell Socialists almost as much as the rest of the Constitution. They are articles 12 and 118. The first contains the statement:—

In the U.S.S.R. the principle of Socialism is being realised: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

The second says that "Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work—the right to receive guaranteed work with payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality."

Those who know nothing of Socialist principles and who (like the *Daily Worker*) can see nothing strange in describing the Labour Party as "socialist," will find these principles in no way remarkable; payment in accordance with the quantity and quality of work is, after all, the declared principle of every capitalist undertaking. Socialists, however, can only be amazed at the impudence of the Communists in trying to pass off as a principle of Socialism "to each according to the quantity and quality of his work."

We have heard of another, quite different, principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

Perhaps the *Daily Worker* will tell us why they have produced this corrupted version and on what ground they describe it as socialist.

\* \* \*

### Pigs "Better Housed and Fed" than Proletarians

Sir Benjamin Dawson, Bt., Chairman of the Bradford Central Division Conservative Association, recently alarmed his political associates by making a speech on the condition of the workers in Bradford. It happened thus: he read an advertisement asking for "coals for the poor and aged," and he was surprised that such things could be necessary in view of the progress we are supposed to have made in the past forty years. So he made a tour of inspection.

"When I had finished my tour, I felt thoroughly ashamed of my country, thoroughly ashamed of the National Government, and thoroughly ashamed of the Conservative Party."

"The pigs on my farm are better housed and fed than some of the people I saw that day."—(From a pamphlet reproducing the speech.)

Sir Benjamin, as a mark of his sincerity, rushed off to the Conservative Association, told them what he had seen and what he felt, and offered to resign his chairmanship.

He went on to make some other pertinent remarks about the fact that poverty exists in the midst of plenty, and that those who have money can get what they want and where they want it—on top of Mount Snowdon if they so desire.

Nevertheless, Sir B. Dawson makes a common error in saying that "the cause of these terrible conditions is poverty, and poverty arises from unemployment."

For years the S.P.G.B. has combated the false doctrine that only the unemployed are poor. Poverty exists for the employed worker as well. Consequently, Sir B. Dawson's remedy—shorter hours, so that the unemployed can be absorbed into employment—is no remedy at all, even if it achieved its first purpose of removing unemployment. Even if all the workers were got back to work, they would still be poor. Moreover, capitalism would continue to create more unemployment by introducing still more labour-displacing machinery.

\* \* \*

### A Hero of the Home Front

Mr. J. H. Thomas, war-supporter, did all of his fighting on the home-front, which gives an odd flavour to a remark in the *Times* editorial on the passing of Thomas: "He faced the emergency of war without flinching. . . ." (*Times*, June 3rd, 1936.)

Quite a lot of us can face other people's wars without flinching.

\* \* \*

### A Question to a Labour Councillor

Speaking at a Conference of the Socialist League on June 1st, a Mr. F. R. Levy, of Stepney, said that he is a member of a council with sixty-five Labour members out of seventy.

The majority of them do not know the first little thing about Socialism or what it stands for. They are either out for a career or are there because some friend of theirs wants a job.—(*Manchester Guardian*, June 2nd, 1936.)

Mr. Levy went on to urge greater care in the selection of Labour candidates, which misses the most important point about the whole matter, that is, the character of the vote behind the elected delegate. There will be no progress towards the conquest of power for Socialism until the electorate is Socialist, when it will give a mandate for Socialism. If Mr. Levy desired to help Socialism on he could begin now by fighting elections on one demand only—Socialism. We know it is safe to say that the whole of the Labour candidates, at Stepney and elsewhere, do nothing of the kind. Instead they solicit votes on a programme of reforms of capitalism, thus delaying the day when the workers will realise that their only salvation is in Socialism.

### Mr. Chamberlain's Understanding of Capitalism

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech in Parliament on May 20th, made two admissions of interest to Socialists. The first was an admission that capitalism will in due course produce another trade depression.

. . . . I accept the broad principle that these things do work in cycles, and I have to look forward to the time when we may expect in the natural course of things that trade activity will diminish instead of increase.—(*Hansard*, col. 1266, May 20th, 1936.)

(It is worth noticing how Mr. Chamberlain unconsciously identifies capitalism with nature, and says "in the natural course of things" when he should say "in the capitalist course of things.")

The second point (col. 1,263) discloses the way in which a capitalist financial expert views expenditure on old-age pensions, unemployment, etc. Another M.P. had said, "Why not raise wages and scrap the expenditure on the social services?" Mr. Chamberlain replied as follows:—

I did not quite apprehend how my hon. Friend thought it would be possible to provide that the rise in the wages of the workers could be so general, widespread and universal as to give them the equivalent for the social services they would lose.

Mr. Chamberlain here admits the Socialist contention that social services are an alternative to wage increases, and his references to "spreading" explain why the capitalists prefer the method of social services. A wage increase will be largely spent by the workers on satisfying the immediate needs of themselves and their families, and still leave the capitalists to provide for the destitute and for the big increase of unemployment during times of crisis. In other words, the social service method is cheaper.

\* \* \*

### French Capitalists Provide German Armaments

The following is taken from an article in the American *Industrial Worker* (April 18th, 1936), written by Pierre van Paassen:—

France is arming Germany! Her munitions makers, like those of other lands, know no fatherland but profit.

If Herr Hitler felt strong enough March 7th to defy the world, tear the Locarno Treaty to shreds and install himself on the Rhine with heavy artillery, monster tanks, mobile forts of steel and bombing planes, this was made possible by the French mining trusts.

Seventy-five per cent. of the steel in Germany's artillery and other war equipment comes from France. Seventy-five per cent. of the shells and bullets which are going to kill French soldiers or the soldiers of nations allied with France in an eventual war with Germany are of French origin.

An average of 60 freight trains loaded with iron ore left France every day in 1933, 1934, and 1935 for Germany. The rate of export is even higher in 1936.

An expert, Paul Allard, has figured out that of every two shells Germany fires off in the next war, one will be of French origin. That is to say, one out of every two shells fired by Germans to kill

Frenchmen in the next war will represent a profit to the Comité des Forges, the great French steel trust.

\* \* \*

### The Co-Operative Movement Admits Defeat

The Co-operative movement is not only fundamentally different from the conceptions of such pioneers as Robert Owen, but even the restricted aims it set itself are now seen to be unattainable. The latter-day notion was that the co-operative trading and manufacturing organisations could beat the private capitalist traders on their own field and thus gradually drive them out of business.

The controllers of the movement now know that this is impossible. At the recent congress of the Co-operative Union a delegate stated that "after ninety years of co-operation they still had only ten per cent. of the retail trade in the country and only half of that trade was placed with the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Only one-third of that was manufactured in their own factories." (*Daily Herald*, June 4th, 1936.)

A still more amazing confession of failure is an advertisement issued by the C.W.S. itself, in the June issue of *The Clerk*. It is an appeal to readers when shopping at Co-operative stores to insist that articles purchased came originally from the Co-operative Wholesale Society, and not from a private wholesaler or manufacturer. In other words, the retail Co-operative stores are refusing to buy Co-operative goods themselves, doubtless to a great extent because they can make a bigger profit by handling the better-known products of private manufacturers.

\* \* \*

### Illusions about Russia, Sweden and France

For years the Bolsheviks complained, with good reason, that the capitalist Press was filled with reckless or deliberately lying statements about conditions in Russia. It would appear that many Communists decided that the best answer to one lie is another. Consider, for example, the following utterly untrue assertion about Russia, which appeared in the *Daily Worker* (June 1st, 1936), from their own Moscow correspondent:—

In the U.S.S.R. Socialist society has been built.

This is untrue, and the *Daily Worker* knows it.

Another ridiculous statement, this time about Sweden, was made by the City Editor of the *Daily Herald* on June 8th, 1936. Mr. Francis Williams there tells us that the administration of capitalism in Sweden by a Labour Government is an instance of "Socialism in action."

There is this difference between Mr. Williams and the *Daily Worker*, that Mr. Williams just does not know any better.

A third statement, about France, was made by



Major Attlee, leader of the Labour Party. Writing in the *Daily Herald* (June 15th, 1936), he said:—

There are many people who have maintained until now that Socialism could not be introduced without bloodshed. The French Government is showing that it can.

All three statements are entirely without foundation, and such lies or ignorance do untold harm to Socialism.

### The Friends of J. H. Thomas

The *Daily Worker* (May 25th, 1936) celebrates the eclipse of Mr. J. H. Thomas by telling us that they always knew he was a friend of the ruling class and an enemy of the workers, right back to 1926, 1921, 1919 and 1911—the dates of various noteworthy betrayals.

All of this may be true, but will the Communists now tell us why they persisted in playing Thomas's game by telling the workers he was a fit and proper person to have their votes and represent their interests in Parliament after 1911, after 1919, after 1921 and after 1926? Even after the General Strike the Communists continued this policy, and mentioned J. H. Thomas by name as one of the Labour M.P.s they would not oppose. (See *Communist Review*, February, 1928.)

### Saving the Girls from Vice

*Reynolds' News*, advocate of the stupid policy of trying to improve capitalism with reforms instead of abolishing it, neatly gave its whole case away in its issue of May 17th, 1936. It published an article on "Soho's Vice Racketeers," and demanded instant action to stop landlords from drawing high rents from brothels. This is how the article ends:—

Fifty years have passed since W. T. Stead aroused the sleeping conscience of the nation by his *Pall Mall* revelations of "The Maiden Tribute." The M.P. who takes the lid off Soho now will startle the British nation even more.

So fifty years after one reformer reformed London, the position is more startling than ever. So let's pretend to reform it again.

In reformist circles this is known as progress!

### The Half-Brotherhood of the Sea

The building of luxury liners for plutocrats, while the bulk of the population is underfed and miserably housed and clothed, is a mark of the rottenness of capitalist civilisation, and the way the reformists from Labour to Fascist have rushed in to praise it is a mark of their essentially reactionary attitude. The maiden voyage of the "Queen Mary" led the *Daily Herald* to publish a sticky editorial about the "comradeship of the sea which transcends national boundaries." (May 28th, 1936.)

So little does the sea differ from the other fields of competitive profit-seeking that the very

next day the *Herald* published a fierce attack on the Russian Government for carrying timber in Russian and other non-British ships, "in which wages are lower than those of the British and Scandinavian ships which used to handle most of the trade." (*Daily Herald*, May 29th, 1936.) The *Herald* calls it "blacklegging on British shipping and undermining its wage standards," and adds that it "is not going to be quietly tolerated."

Surely this is not comradely language to use towards fellow seafarers?

And while we are on the subject, what about the T.U.C.'s policy of excluding coloured seamen from British ships, even coloured seamen who are British subjects? The Indian Labour movement has long protested against this still less comradely attitude.

### This Jewish Business

The attempt by German Nazis and British Fascists to explain everything under the sun by reference to the 400,000 Jews in Germany and the 350,000 in Britain (fewer than one per cent. of the population) leads them into curious situations. The German doctrine of a pure, noble, non-Jewish, Nordic race, made even Mussolini laugh. He pointed out that the originators of the idea of a "chosen race" were the Jews themselves. Mussolini has never hesitated to employ Jews as his Ministers and assistants. In Austria, where he finances and controls the "Heimwehr," a Fascist movement, one of his principal allies and friends is Otto Mandl, who is also political adviser to Fascist Prince Starhemberg and owner of the great Hirtenberg Arms Factory. Mandl is a Jew. (See *Evening Standard*, October 21st, 1935.) Not for that reason, but because he is a typical capitalist, he supplied arms and munitions both to the Nazis and to the Heimwehr, although they were fighting each other.

In England, Sir Oswald Mosley's organisation attacks the Jews, and is in turn attacked by Lieut.-Col. Hutchison's organisation for being the friend of Jews. *Truth*, published by Hutchison's "National Workers' Party of Great Britain," shows a photograph of Mosley speaking at Birmingham Town Hall on September 25th, 1931, at a meeting of the New Party. "On Mosley's left is Kid Lewis, Jew boxer. . . . Forming a trio, arm-in-arm, is Mr. W. E. D. Allen, son of David and Sarah Allen, nephew of Samuel Allen; some time M.P. for Belfast. . . . Behind Allen is Peter Cheney, another Jew. . . . The lawyer employed by Sir Oswald Mosley and the Blackshirts is Mr. St. John Hutchinson, whose daughter, in 1935, was converted to Judaism, and married a Rothschild."

One of the queer errors into which such nonsense betrays its adherents was illustrated in a recent issue of the *Blackshirt*, which saw fit to

comment on THE SOCIALIST STANDARD being sold at a meeting by an individual in whose features the sharp-eyed Fascist thought he discerned Jewish characteristics. As it happens, the individual in question is indeed of mixed stock—pure British "aryan" mixed with Italian; not a trace of Jewish blood!

But enough of all this rubbish. Individuals are the product of a variety of moulding forces, and the environment of a segregated Jewish group doubtless plays an important part, but dominating all sectional environments is capitalism, with its class divisions and the exploitation of one class by another. The struggles of the exploited to compete with each other for employment, and at the same time to resist the employers, are more important in determining the individual's conduct than the fact of being Jewish or Gentile.

The only really useful contribution towards ridding society of the unpleasant characteristics of exploiters and exploited is to strive for the abolition of class ownership of the means of production and distribution, and this the Fascists are not doing. What they are doing is to provide a political cloak (or rather, a shirt) under which individuals can promote private vendettas and commercial rivalries against Jews. Most of the anti-Jewish activity is of the kind mentioned by the *Manchester Guardian's* Warsaw correspondent: "Many peasants attack Jews merely for looting their shops rather than for other reasons." (*Manchester Guardian*, February 10th, 1936.) The remainder is mainly blind discontent with capitalism misdirected by Fascists into these useless channels. H.

### THE VOICE OF THE PROVINCES

We have received the following letter from readers in Liverpool. Other readers may have something useful to say on the question raised.

"We notice that the S.P.G.B. was founded in 1904, which fact presupposes many years of consistent political interest in London.

"Despite the years which have intervened, however, your contact and influence in the principal industrial centres in the provinces, where it would be expected conditions would have produced the strongest support for your party, remains practically negligible.

"It would be interesting to hear the considered opinions of your London members on this matter, and equally too the views of provincial members and sympathisers. Should sufficient interest be shown by the correspondence which this enquiry may provoke, we hope it may be found possible for your E.C. to arrange a few special meetings for provincials in London, say, on Sunday evenings, timed to fit in with the many half-day excursions from the provinces.

"Anyway, we are of the opinion that for independent thinking and resolute revolutionary aspirations, the average provincial can make circles round the politically interested London worker. In the provinces London is referred to as a political cesspool. Does this explain why most of the big 'stars' in the 'Labour world' are the chosen leaders in the provinces?"

Yours for Socialism,  
"PROVINCIALS."

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Head Office and Headquarters of the Socialist Party in Canada, 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.

Will all those interested in the development of a revolutionary Socialist Party, and desirous of obtaining further information, write to the official Secretary, F. Neale, 179, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.?

Those requiring books or pamphlets on Socialism, or wishing to subscribe to the SOCIALIST STANDARD, official organ of the S.P. of G.B. (subscription rates, 75 cents a year), write to Literature Agent, c/o F. Neale.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 26th Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand. Secretary, A. W. McMillan, 20, Randwick Crescent, Lower Hutt, Wellington, where SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

## PROPAGANDA MEETING

### ON DURDHAM DOWNS, BRISTOL

Chiswick Branch are organising a Propaganda Meeting on Durdham Downs, Bristol, at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, July 12th. Speaker, COMRADE CLIFFORD.

It is hoped that as many readers as possible in Bristol of the SOCIALIST STANDARD will attend this meeting.

### BLOOMSBURY.

Lectures are held each Monday, at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (Corner of Guilford Street), W.C. 1.

- |        |   |                   |
|--------|---|-------------------|
| July 6 | "Is Hitler the Real Menace to Peace?"   | (Open Discussion) |
| " 13   | "Palestine—The Promised Land"           | A. KOHN           |
| " 20   | "The New Russian Constitution Examined" | E. HARDY          |
| " 27   | "Japan's Bid for Supremacy"             | W. CLIFFORD       |

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

"THE SOCIALIST STANDARD" can be obtained in Central London at:

Collett's Shop, Charing Cross Road.

Newstand at corner of Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road.



## Outdoor Propaganda Meetings

### SUNDAYS

Cock Hotel, East Ham	8 p.m.
Brockwell Park	6 p.m.
Clapham Common	7 p.m.
Regents Park	11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park	6 p.m.
Victoria Park	5.30 p.m.
Whipps Cross	8 p.m.
Ridley Road, E.	8 p.m.
Queens Road, Bayswater	8 p.m.
Putney, Towing Path	11.30 a.m.
Forest Gate, (Sylvan Road, Upton Lane), Near "Princess Alice"	8 p.m.

### SATURDAYS

Undine St., Tooting	8 p.m.
Roper Street, Eltham	8 p.m.
West Green Corner	8 p.m.

### MONDAYS

Highbury Corner	8 p.m.
Ilford Station	8 p.m.
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	8 p.m.
Ridley Road, Dalston, E.	8 p.m.

### WEDNESDAYS

Cock Hotel, East Ham	8 p.m.
Avenue Road, Lewisham	8 p.m.
Fulbourne Street, E.	8 p.m.
Deanery Road, Stratford, E.	8 p.m.

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from June 10th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec., 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding (Dues Sec.) "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Cafe, Peter Street. Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., I. Benjamin, at above address.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., at Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

*For popular  
revolutions to  
be effectual,  
conviction . . .  
must always  
precede force;  
for force may  
establish, but  
it cannot . . .  
always . . . .  
preserve.*

J. F. BRAY.

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London, August, 1936

[Monthly. Twopence

## Socialists Do Stand for Equality MARX OR STALIN?

THE new draft Constitution now being considered in Russia lays it down that "to each according to the quality and quantity of his work" is a Socialist principle. In the July SOCIALIST STANDARD that assertion was challenged on the ground that the principle is a capitalist one. As the question is an important one, and much confusion is likely to result from the Russian declaration, it was proposed to follow the matter up. In the meantime, the *Daily Worker* (July 4th) has departed from the general rule of the Communists of ignoring the S.P.G.B. by replying to the comment published in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. While the *Daily Worker's* observations are not well-informed, they will serve as an introduction. This is what the *Daily Worker* says:—

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Marxists have always drawn a distinction, corresponding to the distinction in reality, between Socialism and Communism, Socialism being that period between the seizure of power, by the working-class and the epoch of full Communism. In the period of Socialism, the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to the quantity and quality of his work" obtains. Only with full Communism, the conditions for which are built in

the period of Socialism, will the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" be realised.

Lest, however, the "Socialist Standard" should doubt that this has always been the view of true Socialists, I would suggest that the writer of this illiterate piece of nonsense should read Karl Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Programme," where he will find this alleged "corrupted version" fully explained and justified.—*Daily Worker*, July 4th, 1936.

The writer of the above, with more trust in Stalin than knowledge of the subject, has simply repeated what Stalin has said on several occasions. It happens, however, that Stalin's version of Socialist theory, and even of the past activities of the Bolsheviks, can be shown to be false. Let us, therefore, examine the points one by one, beginning with the terms Socialism and Communism.

### The Terms Socialism and Communism

These terms have had a chequered history, but it can be said with certainty that the *Daily Worker's* statement about them is wrong. It is not correct that Marxists have always used the term Socialism to mean a "period between the seizure of power by the working-class and the epoch of full Communism." Marx did not, neither did Engels, and Lenin knew this even if the *Daily Worker* does not know it. Lenin, in "The State and Revolution," actually quotes from Marx a passage in which Marx referred to such a period, but did not use the term Socialism to describe it. "The passage Lenin quoted from Marx begins with the words: "But these defects are unavoidable in the first phase of Communist society . . ." (See "The State and Revolution," by N. Lenin. Pub. Allen & Unwin, Ltd. p. 96.) We see then that Marx at that date, did not call this period Socialism but



"the first phase of Communism." It is Lenin, not Marx, who then interposed the words "generally called Socialism." (p. 96.)

Notice, too, that while the *Daily Worker* says "always," Lenin said "generally"; but even Lenin's more cautious statement is wrong, except possibly as regards usage in Russia alone. To what extent in Russia the terms Socialism and Communism were used in this way we do not know, although it seems probable that even there it has been a comparatively recent development. Outside Russia it appears to have existed only in the imagination of the *Daily Worker*.

Marx and Engels used the terms Communism and Socialism to mean precisely the same thing. They used "Communism" in the early years up to about 1875, and after that date mainly used the term "Socialism." There was a reason for this. In the early days, about 1847-1850, Marx and Engels chose the name "Communism" in order to distinguish their ideas from Utopian, reactionary or disreputable movements then in existence, which called themselves "Socialist." Later on, when these movements disappeared or went into obscurity, and when, from 1870 onwards, parties were being formed in many countries under the name Social-Democratic Party or Socialist Party, Marx and Engels reverted to the words Socialist and Socialism. Thus when Marx in 1875 (as mentioned by Lenin) wanted to make the distinction referred to by the *Daily Worker*, he spoke of the "first phase of Communist society" and "a higher phase of Communist society." Engels, writing in the same year, used the term Socialism, not Communism, and habitually did so afterwards. Marx also fell, more or less closely, into line with this change of names and terms, using sometimes the one, sometimes the other, without any distinction of meaning.

It will be noticed that one of the most widely circulated works of Engels was called by him "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," not "Communism, Utopian and Scientific."

Another partial break in the use of names came in 1918, when the Bolsheviks (the majority wing of the Russian Social-Democratic Party) wished to indicate their repudiation of the wartime actions of their associates in the Second International. To do this they changed their name to Communist Party, and when they formed the Third International they called it Communist. Even then the British Communist Party only partly fell into line in the use of terms, and continued very largely to use the term Socialism as synonymous with Communism. Thus the 1929 Election manifesto of the Communist Party of Great Britain, "Class against Class," repeatedly uses the term Socialism, and only once the term Communism. Each time Socialism occurs in that manifesto it is as the equivalent of Communism, and never in the way the *Daily Worker* says that "Marxists have always" used it.

The S.P.G.B., throughout its existence, has used the term Socialism, never in the manner the *Daily Worker* alleges the term is used, but always to mean what Marx and Engels meant by Socialism and Communism. Further, the S.P.G.B. has never helped to spread confusion by conceding the term Socialist to such bodies as the British Labour Party. The Communist Party—in this as in other directions—has managed to box the compass, declaring at one time that the Labour Party is "the third capitalist party. It lays claim to the title of Socialist Party, but has nothing to do with Socialism" ("Class against Class," p. 8), and at another time referring to it as a Socialist Party (Mr. Harry Pollitt, in a letter to the *Town Crier*, Birmingham, June 26th, 1936).

Among many other illustrations of the way in which the terms Socialism and Communism have been used may be mentioned the English translation of the Communist Bogdanoff's "A Short Course of Economic Science," the final chapter of which carries the sub-title, "Socialist Society," and uses the term Socialism in place of and as the equivalent of Communism. The book was published by the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1923.

So much for the question of terms. Now for the basic principle of Socialism and Stalin's revised version of it, remembering all the while that Stalin, when he uses the term Socialism, means the phase after the workers' capture of power, and when he uses the term Communism he means the later phase. Stalin claims that Russia is now in the first phase and developing towards the later phase.

#### "From Everyone According to His Capacities, to Everyone According to His Needs"

This principle, quoted by Marx in the course of his criticism of the programme adopted by the German Social-Democrats at their Congress at Gotha in 1875, was by no means original. Similar ideas were discussed by the equalitarians during the French Revolution, and later on by such men as Louis Blanc, in France, and J. F. Bray, in England. Louis Blanc was using this same principle in 1839, although on occasion he employed it in reverse order—"To each according to his needs, from each according to his abilities." It was framed in opposition to the doctrine of the followers of Saint-Simon, "Let each be placed according to his capacity and rewarded according to his work."

Now for Marx's views on the subject. In his criticism of the Gotha programme in 1875, he pointed out that "the co-operative commonwealth based upon common ownership of the means of production" (i.e., Socialism, or, as he then called it, Communism) would have a "first phase" in which it would be "afflicted with the congenital defects of the society from which it has sprung." In this first phase the individual "receives from society a voucher showing that he has done so-and-

so much work. . . . On presentation of this voucher he withdraws from the communal storehouse of articles of consumption as much as this quantum of work is worth." (The quotations are from the S.-L.P. edition called "the Socialist Programme," translated by Eden and Cedar Paul, and published in 1918.) In this first phase there would, Marx says, be mal-adaptations. Thus if each individual were required "to do an equal quantum of work, and all to receive an equal share from the social fund of articles of consumption," the man with dependants to keep would be worse off than the single man, while the stronger and more clever individuals would be able to do the required amount of work with less effort than the weak. Marx added that "such mal-adaptations are inevitable in the first phase of Communist society, because it is born out of capitalist society."

In due course the first phase would go, giving place to a higher phase:—

In a higher phase of communist society, when the slavish subordination of the individual to the yoke of the division of labour has disappeared, and when concomitantly the distinction between mental and physical work has ceased to exist; when labour is no longer the means to live, but is in itself the first of vital needs; when the productive forces of society have expanded proportionately with the multi-form development of the individuals of whom society is made up—then will the narrow bourgeois outlook be utterly transcended, and then will society inscribe upon its banners, "From everyone according to his capacities, to everyone according to his needs!"

(It may be mentioned that Louis Blanc and others had also preceded Marx in stating that this last principle would not be applicable until after a "transition" period.)

Before going on to the present distortion of Marx's writings by the Russian Communists, certain observations may be made in order to put Marx's words into proper perspective. His comments on the Gotha programme were "marginal notes," to use his own description, and were written at a time when he was "overwhelmed with work." They are, for the most part, clear enough, but in certain passages undue compression has left ambiguity. For example, there is the solitary reference to "the distinction between mental and physical work" which has been seized upon by Stalin as the basis of his revision. Though it is by no means certain what Marx meant, it is arguable that he considered that, in the "first phase," "mental" workers would have to be placed on a somewhat higher level than other workers. They would get a somewhat larger share of products. If that was Marx's view it is still questionable, however—even in the circumstances envisaged by him in 1875—whether any such differentiation would not produce more problems and difficulties than it would solve. More importantly, the circumstances envisaged by Marx at that time are widely different from the circumstances that would now obtain after a Socialist majority have gained control of the political machinery. In 60

years the "productive forces of society have expanded" greatly—thus removing to a considerable extent one of the obstacles to the inauguration of the "higher phase." Secondly, the working class have already travelled some distance away from capitalist notions about work and pay. Thirdly, we know from the experience of these 60 years that the understanding of Socialism which the workers will have to acquire before the conquest of power for Socialism becomes a possibility will be considerably greater than Marx held to be necessary in 1875. In short, all the reasons for having a phase based on "to each according to his work" (and for possible differentiation between mental and physical work) will have disappeared or be greatly weakened.

Now let us look further at Marx's views, and also Lenin's views on the subject of equality of wages.

#### Marx and Lenin on Equal Pay

Whatever Marx may have had in mind about the "distinction between mental and physical work" there is no doubt whatever that he strongly favoured at least *approximate* equality of wages, in the first phase, until such time as distribution "according to need" would eliminate the whole problem. Writing on the Paris Communards of 1871, Marx, in his "Civil War in France" (Labour Publishing Co. edition, 1921), highly approved their rule that "from the members of the Commune downwards the public service had to be done at workmen's wages" (p. 31. See also p. 34).

At one time (but not now) the Bolsheviks were aware of this. Lenin, in his "Soviets at Work," an address he delivered in April, 1918, expressly endorsed the—

principles of the Paris Commune and of any proletarian rule, which demand the reduction of salaries to the standard of remuneration of the average worker. . . . (See edition published in 1919 by the Socialist Information and Research Bureau, Glasgow. Pages 17-19.)

Lenin was regretting that necessity compelled the Russian Government to pay high salaries to specialists. He did not pretend that it was anything but a backward step. He said, "Such a measure is not merely a halt in a certain part and to a certain degree of the offensive against capitalism . . . but also a step backward by our Socialist Soviet State, which has from the very beginning proclaimed and carried on a policy of reducing high salaries to the standard of wages of the average worker." (Italics ours.)

Lenin went on to call the payment of high salaries "the old bourgeois method," and said, "the corrupting influence of high salaries is beyond dispute—both on the Soviets . . . and on the mass of the workers." He admitted that "to pay unequal salaries is really a step backward; we will not cheat the people by pretending otherwise."

Lenin had also referred to the matter in 1917



in "The State and Revolution." Using the Post Office as an example, Lenin declared (pages 52 and 53) that, after overthrowing the capitalists, the task of the Communists would be to—

Make practical use of the experience . . . which the Commune has given us. To organise our whole material economy like the postal system, but in such a way that the technical experts, inspectors, clerks, and, indeed, all the persons employed, should receive no higher wage than the working man. . . . (Italics ours.)

We see, therefore, what Marx said; how Lenin interpreted Marx; and what Lenin's own emphatic views were.

Then there was a resolution passed by the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1921, an English version of which is given as follows in "Economic History" (January, 1932. Supplement of the *Economic Journal*):—

The theory and practice as regards wages should be based upon as equal a distribution as possible of the standard articles of consumption. However, the Unions will make use of wages both in money and kind, as a means of improving discipline and production.

Now let us jump from Marx and Lenin to Stalin and the present-day Bolsheviks.

#### Marx and Lenin versus Stalin and the "Daily Worker"

The first point to notice is that, whereas Marx and Lenin used the expression "To each according to the quantity of his work" (and Bogdanoff says, "in proportion to the amount of labour"), the new draft Russian Constitution has smuggled in the word "quality" also. (The first Constitution, adopted in 1918, was silent on the point, merely proclaiming the principle, "He that does not work, neither shall he eat.")

Stalin, in recent speeches, has also inserted this word quality, absent from earlier statements of the principle.

Now if this change meant only that the work demanded of the able-bodied shall be of good quality, one could say that the inclusion of the word is unnecessary but harmless, unnecessary because nobody in his senses argues in favour of bad work.

If, on the other hand, it meant that all Russian able-bodied citizens, "from the members of the Government downwards"—to apply the words Marx applied to the Commune—are being paid approximately on the same standard, i.e., "workmen's wages," plus some small bonus for output or for quality as a stimulus to greater output and better quality, three criticisms could be made. One is that such a system would need great care in its application to avoid penalising the weak. The second is that such a measure (justified by Marx and others, for application during the first phase, on the ground of capitalist mentality and low productivity) would be hard to square with Bolshevik claims about their success in making the population Socialist in outlook, and their claims about the high productivity of industry.

The third criticism is, nothing can excuse the Russian Communists' pretence that such a principle is a Socialist one. Even if they were compelled to bow to necessity in the matter of their system of distribution (owing to low productivity and the capitalist outlook of the population) that cannot in any way justify them in circulating in English-speaking countries an English version of the Constitution which declares that "to each according to the quantity and quality of work," particularly as it is applied in Russia, is "the principle of Socialism." The Communists know full well that large numbers of workers have already been deceived by them into believing that what we call Socialism (and what Marx and Engels called Socialism or Communism) has been established in Russia. The Communists cannot escape the charge that they are wilfully deceiving the workers.

Furthermore, Stalin is using this word "quality" as cover for something much worse than differentiated wage rates. Whereas Lenin admitted that inequality was a regrettable necessity, a step backward, a corrupting influence, Stalin (and his new admirer, Sidney Webb) is glorifying it, and doing so under cover of the altered version of Marx's and Lenin's statements.

Lenin wrote in "Soviets at Work" that "our Socialist-Soviet State . . . has from the very beginning proclaimed and carried on a policy of reducing high salaries to the standard of the average worker."

Stalin's Government, far from reducing high salaries, is encouraging them. He goes further and according to the Webbs in their "Soviet Communism" denounces those who now put Lenin's point of view as "leftist blockheads." He declares that the Bolsheviks never held that view.

The Webbs quote from a speech of Stalin's delivered in January, 1934, at the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Russia:—

"These people ('leftist blockheads,' he calls them elsewhere) evidently think that Socialism calls for equality, for levelling the requirements and the personal lives of the members of society. Needless to say, such an assumption has nothing in common with Marxism, with Leninism. By equality Marxism means, not equality in personal requirements and personal life, but the abolition of class. . . ." ("Soviet Communism," p. 702.)

Stalin's speech contains one true and important point, that Socialists are interested primarily in abolishing the private ownership and control of the means of life which is the basis of class division. Stalin is also right in repudiating the idea that Socialists aim at imposing *uniformity*. But in the light of what is actually being done in Russia under Stalin's Government, what meaning are we to attach to his further statement that "Marxism starts out with the assumption that people's abilities and requirements are not, and cannot be, equal in quality or in quantity, either in the period of

Socialism or in the period of Communism"? (Webbs, p. 702).

Marx and Lenin laid it down that in the first phase everyone should be at least approximately on workmen's wages, and in the higher phase, when productivity had increased and prejudices disappeared, all should be treated on the principle "each according to his needs." Stalin's Government does no such thing. It promotes great inequality between the various rates of workmen's pay and between those rates and the salaries, fees, and royalties of technicians, high officials, popular literary men, novelists and so on, and for the later phase it promises "to each according to his needs," but only on the basis that (in Stalin's words) "requirements are not and cannot be equal in quality or in quantity." This can only mean that some are always to have a higher standard of living than others.

The *Daily Worker* objected to our statement that the new Russian principle is a "corrupted version" of the basic principle of Socialism. Is it not evident, however, that Stalin's words and the actions of his Government embody precisely that "corrupting influence" which Lenin associated with high salaries in his "Soviets at Work"?

Let us examine some of the actual applications of Stalin's theory in Russia.

#### Workmen and Others

The Webbs, who thoroughly approve of Stalin's views on this subject, report, in their "Soviet Communism" (p. 711), that in Russian industry work and pay are graded into anything from eight to seventeen grades, but—and this is important—"always excluding the apprentices, with the mere porters, cleaners or gate-keepers on the one hand, and the foremen, technicians and managers on the other." (Note the reference to "mere porters" by our Labour Peer!)

The difference between the pay of the highest and lowest grades of workmen varies according to occupation. In some cases it appears that the highest may be three or four times the amount of the lowest—but outside and above the rates of pay of these workmen's grades are the salaries of foremen and administrative and technical staffs. Why? On what principle? What has become of Lenin's demand that, in the Post Office, for example, technical experts, inspectors, and so on, should get no more than a workman's wage? What has happened to the example of the Commune so praised by Marx and Lenin?

On what ground does the playwright Schkwardin get 300,000 roubles a year from royalties on his plays (compared with a skilled workman's 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000 roubles), making him a very rich man even after deduction of income tax? Is this in accordance with the quantity of his work, even if modified for the supposed distinction between mental and physical work? Is it,

like the average factory worker's pay, based on output or piece-work?

The pay of a head of a department in the Russian local government service is 700 to 1,000 roubles a month, while that of a typist is 175 to 250 roubles a month. How does a Communist decide that the head of a department is worth four typists? And why is he worth half as much again as an engineer or a lawyer (400 to 700 roubles)?

(These figures are taken from the Bulletin of the "International Committee of Employees, etc." Moscow. June, 1936.)

The same question applies to all the favoured groups of politicians, technicians, officials, managers, popular writers and playwrights, etc.

The fact is that the real or supposed needs of Russian State capitalism and of the ruling group and their close associates have given rise to riches and poverty, privilege and lack of privileges, the features of capitalism generally. Russia is faced with the largely non-Socialist outlook of the population and the still relatively low productive capacity of industry. Lenin, when faced with such a necessity, said: "To pay unequal salaries is a step backward; we will not cheat the people by pretending otherwise." Stalin, rather than admit the truth, chooses to gloss it over by misusing Socialist phrases, and by corrupting statements of Socialist principle. His hangers-on throughout the world first give their unqualified support to whatever he may say from time to time, then try to find reasons for doing so afterwards, quite regardless of the interests of the working class and the Socialist movement. H.

#### THE VOICE OF THE PROVINCES

In response to the letter appearing under the above heading in the July issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, the Manchester Branch, at a recent meeting, expressed a desire and willingness to organise a Conference in Manchester of provincial members and sympathisers, for the purpose of hearing their views and news; to discuss ways and means of furthering Party propaganda; membership; formation of provincial branches, etc. Will all those interested, and willing to co-operate and attend, kindly communicate with the Manchester Branch Secretary:—

H. Adler, 74, Shaftesbury Road, Manchester 8.

#### This Month's Quotation

The quotation in the panel is from "Labours Wrongs and Labours Remedy," 1839, by J. F. Bray.

#### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that Cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.



## Does Genius Come from Unhappiness?

**G**ENIUS comes from unhappiness! So reads a headline in an article in the Liverpool *Evening Express*. The grounds for this amazing assertion, you ask? The only reason given by the author of the article in question is that "the great geniuses of the world have been far from happy men." One naturally asks whether, had they been happy, they might not have been even greater geniuses.

The author adopts the expedient of quoting selected instances in support of his assertion, but many other selected instances could be quoted in opposition.

Before we start talking about genius, it might be of interest to understand what is generally meant by this term, and for this purpose the following definition from the Encyclopædia Britannica (14th, 1929, edition) will be of assistance:—

"Genius itself has become the regular English word for the highest conceivable form of original ability, something altogether extraordinary and beyond even supreme educational prowess, and differing in kind, apparently, from 'talent,' which is usually distinguished as marked intellectual capacity, short only of the inexplicable and unique endowment to which the term 'genius' is confined."

The greatest instance of genius given by Mr. Charles Carter, the author in question, is that of Michelangelo—sculptor, painter, architect, military engineer, and poet. Yet the only instance of unhappiness given here is the fact that he was "unhappy" because he was not able to devote as much time as he would have liked to one of his favourite works—the tomb of Julius II. Yet obviously his genius had become apparent and was recognised long beforehand, so it might almost be argued from the evidence given by Mr. Charles Carter himself that it was Michelangelo's own genius which caused his "unhappiness." This would indeed appear to be the case, because it was the recognition of Michelangelo's genius which caused the various potentates to quarrel over him.

Again, however, definition becomes necessary. What do we mean by happiness or unhappiness? Many attempts have been made to define happiness, but the writer ventures to put forward a definition of his own, for which, however, he does not claim any originality, namely, a condition of life in which the individual is able to give full scope to his mental and physical ability. Such a definition will explain the "unhappiness" of Michelangelo, but it does not follow that genius itself results from such unhappiness. It would perhaps be more correct to say that there is a tremendous variety in the make-up of individuals and that the physical factors which make for

"genius" also makes for an incomplete fulfilment of the human organism in all its functions.

Possibly the simplest answer of all to the assertion that genius causes unhappiness is to point out that here are two conditions, viz., "genius" and "unhappiness," and one might just as well argue that genius causes unhappiness as that unhappiness causes genius. The author has either fallen into the trap or deliberately adopted the cheap method of connecting two facts and assuming that the one is the cause of the other when both may, in fact, be due to some other cause.

To revert for a moment to the Encyclopædia Britannica definition given above, it will be noticed that the main idea of genius is originality. When, however, we study originality in the light of historical development, we find that history generally records only those instances which have been useful to the ruling class at a particular epoch, or useful to a new rising class who are about to seize the reins of power. Not only that, but the nature of the originality itself depends upon the stage in economic development which any particular society has reached. We thus find that whilst Galileo was, in 1632, forced to recant his theories, Sir Isaac Newton's great work, published only 55 years later, brought him honour and renown, he being knighted by Queen Anne in 1705. Whilst Galileo's theories menaced the interest of the then dominant church, in Great Britain economic development had reached a stage further, and the new merchant capitalist class welcomed any discovery which seemed beneficial to their interests.

Intelligence is obviously allied to the "genius" spoken of above, and the *Practical Psychologist* of May, 1935, contained a summary of the conclusions which have so far been reached on this subject. Briefly, they are that intelligence is an inherent quality; it may be dormant for some time, but must be already present if it is to be developed. The bright child becomes the bright adult. So that we see that, according to this view at any rate, intelligence does not come from unhappiness. Intelligence is defined as the power to see the various relations or connections between things.

Original ability may, of course, apply to any form of human activity. It may apply to painting, sculpture, music, architecture, mathematics, or practical science. In a system of society based upon the private ownership of the means of production, the last of these is deemed the most important, and hence the average man immediately thinks of practical scientific inventions in connection with the word "genius." Previous instances have been given in these columns of the meagre rewards granted by capitalism to its inventors. Whilst the inventors are themselves spurred on to

investigate and experiment by their need for self-expression, yet where you have a system of society based upon the private ownership of the means of production, the inventor, if he happens to belong to the working class, is obliged to eke out a miserable existence in some uncongenial occupation in order to provide him with the wherewithal of the means of life before he may even attempt to make the researches in which he is interested. Frequently he is unable to patent his ideas on account of the expense, time, and formalities involved, and his ideas may lie dormant for years on this account. Even if he is able to patent them, he is often faced with manufacturers who will not trouble to make the necessary changes to their plant, or by a combine which offers to buy the patent at the price of a Ritz dinner. In this country the inventions of employees in connection with the work on which they are employed are the property of their employers.

Only when "genius" is freed from its subservience to a ruling class, will it be possible for it to be developed to its fullest extent. Such a condition of affairs can only come about under Socialism—the next stage in the development of society, when men will be freed alike from their dependence on a ruling class and the necessity of ministering to the wants of that class, and will be able to devote their energies to improving the means of production and to encourage all forms of ability which promise to add to the general welfare and happiness of mankind. • RAMO.

**Editorial—All Aboard for "Progress,"** *cont. from p. 120.* nor the 'democratic' reorganisation of the League of Nations, will be capable of saving mankind from new Imperialist wars."

It appears then, that the Communists, under Moscow orders, are now committed to a policy of Liberal-Labourism, which makes an absurdity of every theory and every proposal in the Statutes on which the whole Communist movement rests. There is no logical reason why the Communist Party should continue to exist, except that the turn of the year may find Moscow initiating still another change of direction, when Mr. Gallacher will perform his customary feat of swallowing his own words. The fact that he is now a Member of Parliament recalls that, not so many years ago, he was not only outside Parliament, but the most uncompromising opponent of the whole Parliamentary system. If Parliament has had a degenerating effect on him, he will hardly be surprised, since he used to say that Parliament has that effect on those who reach its cushioned seats.

### Educational Activities

A Party Meeting is being held on Saturday, September 5th, at Head Office, to discuss the Party's educational activities. The time of the meeting is 7 p.m.

**Socialists and Pacts with Socialist Parties—***cont. from p. 127.*

of indifference to the working class." It is precisely for that reason that we have not said so, and we challenge our correspondent to show that we have ever said or suggested such a thing.

Granted, then, that the question of peace is a vital one to the workers, how does this necessitate that Socialists (who are utterly opposed to supporting capitalist wars) shall sink their identity in the Labour Party (which supported the last war and is committed to supporting the next if it is under League of Nations auspices)?

The next statement, that the downfall of the ruling class is inevitable because of "the conflict of interests within it," is contrary to Socialist teaching and to all the facts before our eyes. The downfall of capitalism is only inevitable because the working class have an interest in securing its downfall. The overthrow will come from outside the ranks of the capitalist class, not from within. That a minority of capitalists may be at loggerheads with the majority on certain secondary issues may hamper them, it will certainly not itself cause their downfall. On the primary issue of the maintenance of capitalist private ownership all sections of the capitalist class will unite against the working class. Can "United Front" name any exception to this rule?

Regarding the ancient theory resuscitated by "United Front," that a reform demand becomes revolutionary when the capitalist class cannot grant it, not a year passes without numerous instances showing this to be false. By definition, a reformist demand is one which reforms without abolishing capitalism, and which, therefore, *can* be granted by the capitalists. Every time the capitalists are faced with a more or less widespread demand for some reform they can try various methods of splitting, side-tracking or breaking the movement. Failing anything else they can always go half-way and thus rob the movement of a large part of its support. They rarely have to concede the whole of the reform demand, but, of course, could, if need be. That is what they have done with demands for adequate maintenance for the unemployed, old-age pensions, "workers' control," etc., even down to appropriating the name "Socialism" in certain instances.

In conclusion, in order to make the position clear, we would emphasize that Socialism can only be brought about by Socialists. This involves the hard plodding work which the impatient and the ambitious cannot bear to undertake. To avoid it they seize upon any flashy apparent substitute which presents itself. The reformism and political bargaining with the capitalists advocated by "United Front" are all of them quack remedies of that kind. They lead to corruption, disgust and general apathy. Socialists must expose and condemn them without cessation. ED. COMM.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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The SOCIALIST STANDARD may also be obtained promptly through any of W. H. Smiths & Son's bookstalls.

## All Aboard for "Progress"

### COMMUNISTS SEEK A LIB.-LAB. ALLIANCE

THE electoral victory of the Lib.-Lab.-Communist "Popular Front" in France has quickly made the question of a similar movement in this country into a live issue for the parties concerned. Those leaders of the Labour Party who oppose any alliance with Liberals or Communists are at the moment going against the popular tide, even in their own ranks. Mr. Herbert Morrison, who is one of these, put a straight question to the Communists. Are they, he asked, prepared to work with the Liberals? Mr. William Gallacher, the Communists' one Member of Parliament, wrote to the *News Chronicle* on July 18th, replying to this and other questions. Read what Mr. Gallacher says:—

Will the Communists work with the Liberals? Surely, if the Liberals are prepared to fight for peace and for the practical proposals that will mean an advance in the health and well-being of the workers.

Already we have been on peace platforms with Labour, Liberal and Co-operative representatives. What's wrong with that?

If we can get unity of the workers' forces, the strength gained thereby will attract more and more the middle class towards our movement.

The Liberals who represent these middle-class forces will have to come towards us. If they are prepared to support the campaign that we are making—such campaigns, for instance, as the fight against the Unemployment Regulations, shorter working week, peace, etc.—it would be political folly not to accept their co-operation.

Mr. Gallacher also explains in his letter that the Popular Front in France was "directed

towards the fight against Fascism and war, for peace and progress."

Now, at least, we know precisely how far the Communist Party has moved from what were once the distinctive characteristics of the Communist movement. The "Statutes of the Communist International," which are the fundamental basis of the Communist International and of each of its separate parties, demand of the Communist Party of Great Britain that it shall "denounce not only the capitalists, but also their allies, the reformists of every colour and shade"; that it shall "systematically and regularly . . . remove from all responsible positions . . . all reformists and supporters of the 'centre'"; that it shall "recognise the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the 'centre-ists'"; furthermore, that it declare war upon "the old Yellow Social-Democratic parties" (meaning the Labour Party) and "conduct a relentless struggle against the Yellow Amsterdam 'International' of Trade Unions" (meaning the International Federation of Trade Unions, to which the Trades Union Congress belongs).

On the positive side, if a policy so fatal to the working class can be called positive, the Communist Party of Great Britain is bound by its allegiance to the Communist International to assist that body "to organise an armed struggle for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie."

Now, instead of preparing for that armed struggle, the Communists are anxious to line up with Labour or Liberals, or anyone else who is "against Fascism" (say, 90 per cent. of the population), "against war and for peace" (say, 99 per cent.) and "for progress" (surely all the woolly-headed would say they are "for progress"?).

In other words, the Communists are willing to fight on a programme which consists of a few slogans so vague and general that hardly anyone would disagree, plus a few detailed proposals (shorter hours, and opposition to the present Government's means test regulations) so restricted in scope that sufficient concessions could be made to satisfy large numbers of workers without causing any serious inconvenience to the capitalist system.

The Communists will no doubt reply that any manoeuvre is justified if it prevents war. The answer to which is that capitalist wars arise from capitalism, and are not to be waived away by reformist groups solemnly protesting—while maintaining capitalism—that they are in favour of "peace, democracy and reform," or any other nebulous phrases. If Mr. Gallacher would look up the "Statutes" again he would find this argument was foreseen, for the Communist Party of Great Britain is there pledged "to demonstrate to the workers that, without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, neither international arbitration nor conferences regarding the limitation of armaments,

*Continued at foot of previous page, col. 1, p. 119*

## Excursions of "Vanoc II"

"I AM A HERETIC," By "VANOC II." (Peter Davies, 6/-.)

"VANOC II" might easily be regarded among his contemporaries as the Iconoclast of Fleet Street, so ruthlessly has he written of all traditional bourgeois thought and custom. "I am a Heretic" comprises some of the many contributions which Vanoc made to the *Sunday Referee*, and those who read them at the time of their publication in that journal will, we think, readily read them again in their more permanent form. Vanoc wields a powerful pen and knows how to "get there" with a pungent broadside, and is ever-ready to "spike the enemy's guns" by the mere turn of the phrase.

It takes an able writer or debater who will first allow his opponents their points in controversy and then proceed to reveal that they possess nothing worth having. This Vanoc does to a nicety. When writing "In Praise of Courage" as this is expressed in military terms, he says: "The men who fought and died on all sides and in all causes during the years 1914-1918 were brave. The front officers and men of all armies displayed bravery. This fact is not open to doubt. Nor is there any reason to suppose that bravery of the same kind will be lacking in a new war. . . ."

"If history teaches us anything," says Vanoc, "it is that military courage is one of the commonest attributes of men. In war, the enemy is just as brave as the friend; every soldier is aware of that fact. There were, it is true, cowardly

Christians—namely, the principle of inequality. For mercy between equals is an insult."

"Even at the time when Wilberforce was denouncing the treatment of enslaved negroes, tens of thousands of his own countrymen were living

Germans; but there were also cowardly British. But there was enough courage on both sides to ensure a record slaughter."

Vanoc then contraposes this aspect of courage and calls attention to its purpose. "If history has shown the mass of men at all periods to be the possessors of military bravery, it also proves that they have been woefully deficient in civil courage. There have been millions of military heroes for one civil hero."

The underlying reason for this, Vanoc understands well enough.

In a chapter on "An English Reformer," Vanoc cites the case of William Wilberforce as an example of religious hypocrisy, consciously determined or otherwise, which raves against the effects of class exploitation, but persists in bolstering up the system of class rule.

"Wilberforce," says Vanoc, "brought every argument that sentiment could sharpen and eloquence ennoble against slavery; but all his arguments were not so much a condemnation of slavery as a refutation of his own Christian ethic. When, for instance, he appealed for mercy for negro slaves, he vindicated the fundamental social principle of

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



in conditions that swine would have spurned." Here Vanoc strikes a note well worth understanding, when he says, that "sentimentalists who strike heroic attitudes are seldom capable of co-relating phenomena." Possibly this may, to some extent, explain why Wilberforce "chattered with his own conscience to the extent of acquiescing in the infamous Act of Parliament which brazenly acknowledged the right of slave traders to carry on business, provided that cargoes of slaves were limited by the tonnage of ships."

In Karl Marx Vanoc sees one of the best-hated figures in history, and he asks: "Why do they hate this man who has been dead for fifty years? His very beard inspires invective, and bright defenders of capitalism have even probed into his digestive processes in order to discover the origin of the class war." And why not? Marx himself experienced his enemies' hatred, and in some measure thoroughly enjoyed it.

The men who see the way the game of human exploitation is played and who, in addition, expose the rules of the game, must inevitably arouse the ire of those who live by the sweat of the *other fellow's* brow. Perhaps the subtle wisdom of Oscar Wilde's words has a special significance here, namely, that it is not the choice of one's friends that matter so much, it is the choice of one's enemies that is important. In the sense of laying bare the foundations upon which capitalism and all class societies rest, Marx chose his enemies well.

"The driving forces behind Marx's pen," says Vanoc, "were vision and logic—the rarest of all human qualities, the sign-manuals of creative greatness. Marx shares with the great poets the power to see, with the great scientists the ability to analyse and compare, and with the great musicians the courage to orchestrate his ideas to a passionately human theme."

Here we may say that this is no mere idealistic hero-worship. Vanoc will readily concede that specific material conditions must form the basis of all social theory, but—and a big "but" it is—Marx *saw* what millions of others merely *felt*, and Marx let them know it.

On the subject of the so-called crisis in the world of science, Vanoc is just as comfortably at home with the bourgeois scientists and their mysticism as he is in other fields of thought. "It is true," he says, "that natural occurrences and our perceptions of them are two quite different things, just as the movements of mercury in a thermometer are something quite different from the heat phenomenon which calls them forth. But, as we have seen, this does not do away with the fact that causal connections exist between the two series

of occurrences, and through this our sense-perceptions become good instruments for exploring the true nature of the world." This is from a discourse on "The Dance of the Atoms," which is exceedingly well done.

It may seem a far cry from all this to the institution of Christmas, but Socialists will appreciate the fact of ideological forces being conditioned by deeply-laid economic facts. Vanoc has a dialogue with Father Christmas, and the venerable old patriarch of Christian tradition is disrobed, dewhiskered and debunked. Old Man Christmas descends from the chimney into Vanoc's study on Christmas Eve. After a slight altercation, Vanoc offers the other a drink, which is readily accepted, but "without a splash." "Good luck!" says Father Christmas.

Vanoc II: "Good luck! I suppose I can wish a fraud good luck without doing more damage?"

Father Christmas: "Why, of course you can. And you've no need to rub it in about being frauds. What am I among so many? As a business man—"

Vanoc II: "I've always admired you as such. As a business man you're the slickest thing in the calendar. The hot-cross-bun racket is good, but—"

Father Christmas: "No, no! It's too serious. There's not enough in it. Apart from selling the 'Bread of Life' itself, I think I can pride myself on being the most successful merchant of the mysteries. I can give you exact statistics—"

Vanoc II: "Don't! They depress me."

Father Christmas: "There you go again! Always the Puritan!"

Vanoc II: "Not at all. I was thinking—"

Father Christmas: "No need to think about me and my works. We're just child's play. If it happens, incidentally, to be good business, I say, 'Thank God!'"

Vanoc II: "No doubt. But again you're putting the cart before the horse. For it isn't child's play that happens to be good business, but good business that happens to be child's play."

And so on is old Daddy Christmas exposed as a mere retailer of commodities, the cash nexus being the underlying reality by which the passage down the chimney is facilitated. This is why Vanoc compels Christmas to admit that he visits some households more than others, and some not at all.

We have no hesitation in recommending Vanoc's book, even though he sometimes skates on the thin ice of "Bolshevism," as he went chasing after the blood of Mussolini and Hitler.

Vanoc not only says good things, but says them with telling effect. In this sense, may we say "more power to his elbow"? ROBERTUS.

## The Menace of Aerial Warfare

(Continued)

TOWARDS the end of the War we sat in our cellars and whispered after each bomb that dropped nearby, "Can you smell gas?" We didn't know what it smelt like, but we sniffed apprehensively and hoped there would be no strange smell. What if we had smelt gas? We should have died like rats in a sewer. We should have been merely part of the dead incidental to war. And not even the useless consolation of a place on a Roll of Honour. The war-dead, whether they are civilians or civilian soldiers, are victims of a predatory anarchy, which exists between nations by virtue of the profit system. They are not even romantic victims. They die terror-stricken, in mud and filth. They crouch in holes, waiting for high-explosive and asphyxiating and excoriating gases to put a period to their lives. Their monument is an interim dividend.

What is the answer of capitalism to this? Aeroplanes, more aeroplanes, and yet more aeroplanes, with bombers in the ratio of two to one.

Let me give you another little picture, this time drawn by Major Endries, in his book, "Gift Gaskreig." This is an English raid on the German manufacturing town of Dusseldorf:—

Light bombing squadrons arrive quickly in the darkness. They drop on the largest and most important factories, now working on night shift, bombs filled with white phosphorus. A torrent of inextinguishable flames overwhelm the buildings. Workmen attempt panic-stricken escapes to the cellars—the population, more panic-stricken, flies underground. The raiding party wireless to H.Q. "successful raid," and calls for a second raiding party. These arrive with light gas bombs, spreading first an irritant gas that can pierce masks, followed by a second, stronger and more lethal gas, which kills the populace as they flee from underground cellars made uninhabitable by the first gas. Every two or three hours similar attacks are repeated on different parts of the town until everything is enveloped in flames, and clouds of poison gas mark the place where before hundreds of thousands of human beings lived and moved.

It has been suggested that an electric ray or system of electrical power projection might be used against hostile aircraft. Apart from widely scattered articles in the sensational press, there has been no evidence that such a ray or power projection is contemplated or possible, but presumably it would operate by interfering with the ignition, either magnetic or coil, and—a remoter possibility—by exploding the fuel tank. It is a matter of fact, however, that intensive experiments have been in progress during the last few years with the application of the compression ignition engine (the Diesel) to aircraft, and the engine will be available for use in heavy aircraft within a matter of months. A ray of the type suggested would, therefore, be quite useless, since the Diesel has no electrical machinery to be affected, and the crude oil fuel is practically non-inflammable.

It is not difficult under a régime of unrestricted

development to contemplate bomb and container designs which would release poison gas to dissipate uniformly in a low-lying cloud or death blanket not higher than our tallest buildings. But assume a blanket one hundred yards high, which gives a big margin of error, and we find that less than half a ton of chemical is sufficient to produce effective saturation over a square mile. Even if you multiply this by a thousand to allow largely for wind losses, barriers and higher concentrations, you are still far within the limits of practicable gas attack from the air.—"Scientific Disarmament," Victor Lefebvre.

Mustard gas, which, with Lewisite, is the gas best adapted for the destruction of civilian populations, is known technically as dicloethyl-sulphide. With Lewisite and chlorpicrin it is classified as a vesicant gas because it attacks not only the respiratory organs, but also the eyes, skin and surface tissue of the body. The mask, therefore, is not an efficient or a complete protection. Ordinary clothing will protect against mustard or Lewisite for two or three minutes, after which the gas, which is an easily vapourising liquid, penetrates to the skin. A complete suit of oilskin, so constructed as to be airtight, is a protection, but as such suits could not be worn for more than an hour or two without collapse, it is a matter of Hobson's choice. As an emergency protection against low concentrations, motor grease smeared thickly on the exposed parts of the body, and especially between the fingers, in the elbow joints, and the parts of the head uncovered by the mask, is said to be effective. The manufacture of oilskin suits in useful quantities is impossible, and the cost would necessarily prohibit wide distribution among the class of people most in need of them—the workers.

Low concentrations of mustard do not kill if the respiratory organs are properly protected, although Lewisite, so far as effective concentration is concerned, is largely an unknown quantity. It causes painful lesions of the skin and tissue, and ulcers and sores, which may lead to prolonged invalidism. The ulcers may be gangrenous and, in the case of Lewisite, will, unless dealt with rapidly, be arsenically poisoned.

The injuries are very difficult of healing. A resultant tendency to despondency and lowering of morale in the patient is often seen. The combating of this must be made a special point in nursing these cases.—"First Aid in Defence Against Chemical Warfare" (Collins & Blackmore).

Both mustard and Lewisite are known as persistent gases, *i.e.*, they persist in the place where dropped for periods varying between seven and fourteen days. The contaminated areas must be treated immediately with "bleach" (chloride of lime in powder form) if they are to be moderately safe for use. These gases also persist on the clothing of persons who have been in contact with them, and, if they entered a warm room or gas-shelter, unless their clothing was removed, they would injure the persons in the shelter. Mustard



does not affect the skin immediately, the period of delay being from three to twenty-four hours. It is therefore quite possible for such persons to transmit the gas unknowingly for a considerable time. Used against disciplined troops, with proper respiratory protection, the proportion of deaths to casualties from mustard gas is very low, but it cannot be too greatly emphasised that the population of our large cities have not the necessary discipline and knowledge to protect itself.

On cold nights mustard is liable to lay in liquid form on the ground, becoming a dangerous vapour when the temperature rises in the morning.

Food contaminated by mustard gas is uneatable. Mustard burns are as painful inside as out—and fatal. It is certain that docks and wharves would be heavily bombed with mustard to contaminate essential food supplies.

Water is easily contaminated, and boiling is not a protection. To drink affected water might easily be fatal. Reservoirs are easily bombed, and cannot be covered, because water depends upon contact with air to keep it fresh.

Chloride of lime is an efficient neutralising agent, but it is doubtful (to say the least) if enough could be manufactured to supply the civilian population and the forces actively engaged, and since very large supplies of this chemical would be a tactical necessity for the armed forces, the amount available for civilian defence would be inadequate. It is not an exaggeration to say that adequate supplies of chloride of lime will be the deciding factor in any future European war. Lewisite has the definite disadvantage of being efficiently neutralised by water, large supplies of which are usually available. Mustard, on the other hand, can be used to infect large areas for several days, and during this time no troops could use the areas in question. To gain contact with the opposing forces it would be necessary to make "neutral" lanes through the gas by spreading large quantities of chloride of lime.

The most usual type of mustard gas bomb weighs 50 lbs. and contaminates about 600 square yards; the average load of a bombing aeroplane would, therefore, be 90 bombs capable of infecting an area of 54,000 square yards. In practice, of course, there would be a great deal of overlapping, and the figure given cannot be regarded as accurate. Even if we reduce the area by 50 per cent., however, we are left with 27,000 square yards, or 15 square miles, and, although the population of such an area would not necessarily be killed in its entirety, the total of fatal and non-fatal casualties would be extremely high, and it would be dangerous in the extreme for the survivors to move until the gas had been neutralised. There is, too, the additional problem of dealing with injured persons, which, at the present time, seems impossible of solution.

When, during the late War, it was proposed to use mustard gas in shells, it was discovered that the use of liquid presented serious problems in ballistics, which had to be overcome before it could be used. Although these technical difficulties were overcome, gas shells will always remain complicated and expensive things to make. The gas bomb, on the other hand, is not fired by percussion, but dropped. The difficulty, therefore, does not arise. A certain amount of streamlining is used for greater accuracy, but, quite apart from the fact that a gas bomb does not require to be very accurate, even petrol-tins filled with liquid gas and dropped, almost without discrimination, would be effective.

The practice of spraying gas from containers has not yet been used against civilians, but, given reasonable weather conditions, there is no reason why it should not be effective.

It is improbable that gases of the phosgene type would be used against large centres of population, chiefly because mustard is much more effective, easier to handle and as cheap to manufacture. A large distribution of masks capable of protecting the respiratory organs, the provision of gas-shelters and the efficient gas-proofing of rooms (a comparatively easy job) in the better-built private houses, would provide adequate protection against this gas, which is deadly enough in its effects upon the unprotected, but non-persistent and relatively easy to keep out. Sternutator gases, to stampede the people, *might* be used, but to assume that the enemy in time of war (whoever the enemy might be) would wish to stampede the people when they could kill them as quickly and easily is a little naive.

It seems clear, then, that we shall have to deal almost entirely with the vesicant gases, high-explosive, thermit and possibly bacteria, and I therefore proceed to a consideration of these three last factors, which, in the anxiety to provide against the major threat of gas, are too often overlooked.

#### High-Explosive, Thermit and Bacteria

High-explosive is chiefly valuable in air attack for cutting essential connections, such as light, power, gas, water and drainage, in the spreading of general panic by reason of the violence of its effects, and in the destruction of shelters.

There has been great development in the destructive power of high explosive since 1918, and also in the technique of its use.

As an example, the time-delayed bomb may be considered. This bomb explodes between four and 36 hours after it has been dropped, the time of explosion being under full control. In regard to this weapon, the report of the German Red Cross in 1928 to the 13th International Red Cross Conference says:—

It is obvious that all rescue and protective measures would be practically useless if such a bomb

exploded in a town after several hours or days. Even the best organised rescue services could scarcely be brought into action under such conditions, and such a step would really mean useless sacrifice.

High-explosive bombs used in aeroplane attacks on London during the last War weighed about 30 lbs. Airship bombs were somewhat larger. Bombs at that time were sufficiently "delayed" to explode after passing through two or three storeys, and could destroy a large house.

It is now possible to construct bombs carrying upwards of a ton of explosive.

In the section dealing with protection I quote some figures given by General Von Haefen, and there is no reason to regard them as exaggerated. Explosive is much more dangerous and destructive than it was twenty years ago.

Thermit has not yet been used against civilians. Its use in times of peace is for welding iron and steel, *particularly under-water welding*. It can produce a fire-centre of 3,000 degrees Centigrade—above the melting temperature of steel. There is no method of extinguishing it.

Thermit is a mixture of magnetic iron oxide and aluminium powder, and it can be used equally well in shells or bombs. Thermit bombs weigh approximately 2 lbs., and each bomb is capable of starting a fire centre. Aeroplanes can carry large numbers of these bombs, and it would be a simple matter to start *several hundred fires*, which might or might not be serious, within the space of an hour or so.

The London Fire Brigade quite recently required most of its personnel and equipment, and the assistance of several fire-floats, to put out a wharf fire, and spent five days doing it. They could not even start to mitigate the effects of several hundred fires springing up in rapid succession.

The question of the use of bacteria is one that has often been written round, but never seriously examined, in the public Press. This is probably because the effect of this type of warfare is largely incalculable.

It has been rumoured that, at the close of the last War, preparations had been made in several countries to use bacteria, and, in particular, that glanders cultures were discovered in a German embassy for the avowed purpose of infecting Rumanian cavalry horses. Rumour, of course, is proverbially the lying jade, but the technical resources of the time permitted it, and war, after all, is the art of inflicting the maximum of destruction upon the enemy with the minimum of damage to oneself. It would be absurd to expect any considerations of humanity or ethics to temper the tortuous workings of the military mind. The recent bombing of Red Cross units in Abyssinia was quite predictable. It is merely the military mind running true to type.

L. G. SAVAGE.

(To be continued.)

#### WEEK-END SCHOOL

A week-end school is being held at "Woodlands" Camp, near Sevenoaks, Kent, on Saturday and Sunday, August 29th and 30th. There are facilities for swimming, sunbathing, outdoor games, discussion, and there will be lectures on Saturday evening and Sunday. Sleeping accommodation is provided in clean, dry, warm huts.

The charge is 7/6 per person, covering accommodation and all meals, from Saturday tea to Sunday tea. For those who bring their own tents the charge is 6/-.

Those who wish to come only on the Sunday may do so.

Nearest station, Otford (two miles from camp). Fare, 4/3 week-end return from Holborn Viaduct or Victoria.

All who wish to attend for the week-end or for Sunday should without delay inform the Central Organiser, "Summer School," at Head Office, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

#### Correction

##### "A QUESTION TO A LABOUR COUNCILLOR"

We are informed that the name of the Councillor who made the remarks referred to under the above heading in the July issue is F. R. LEWEY not F. R. LEVY. We regret the error which was due to the name being wrongly given in the press.

ED. COMM.

#### Answer to Correspondent

T. Sealey (Birmingham).—We will see what can be done about reviewing this. It will, however, have to wait for a month or two owing to pressure on space.

ED. COMM.

#### BLOOMSBURY.

Lectures are held each Monday, at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (Corner of Guilford Street), W.C.1.

August 10 "Revolt and Reaction in Spain" (Open Discussion)  
 " 17 "The Struggle for the World's Metals" C. LESTOR  
 " 24 "Development of Socialism in Great Britain" A. KOHN  
 " 31 "Pacifism, Jesus and Marx" - G. CLIFFORD  
 Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

#### MANCHESTER

A Meeting will be held in Stevenson Square on Sunday, 2nd August, at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker - - - TONY TURNER

"THE SOCIALIST STANDARD" can be obtained in Central London at:

Collett's Shop, Charing Cross Road.  
 Newstand at corner of Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road.  
 The Fleet Street Bookstall, 96 Fleet Street (near Ludgate Circus).



## Socialists and War

### A Reader's Queries Answered

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

Although I have read many SOCIALIST STANDARDS, I am still not at all clear regarding your view of war and armaments. Every sane person must be opposed to war. But as to arming. Speaking from where we stand, British Soil, do you advocate complete disarmament and therefore open for any other power to control this land; or while countries all over the world are piling up arms—for defence of course—do you favour some measure of arming by Britain, and if so, to what extent? In a nutshell, I do not care whether it is called arming for defence or offence, do you advocate Britain disarming as things are now on the Continent, or not? Hoping you can help.

Liverpool.

Yours truly, E. C.

### REPLY

Our correspondent's letter, in its first paragraph, contains the statement "every sane person must be opposed to war." This contains only enough of the truth to be very misleading. If we clear up the error in it we shall have gone far to explain the Socialist attitude towards war. The statement, "Every sane person must be opposed to war," contains as much truth as the statement, "Every sane person must be opposed to slums, undernourishment, and excessive work under conditions dangerous to health." Every sane person is opposed to war-horrors and to exploitation *as regards himself*; but when it comes to protecting the interest of one class by imposing these things on other people then both statements are transparently false. If the capitalist class have to choose between giving up their wealth and privilege and freeing the working class from poverty, inhuman exploitation and degrading conditions of life, the capitalist class, as a whole, plump solidly for retaining the misery of the working class. Threatened by a challenge to their position, they will without hesitation set in motion all the machinery of law and force, prisons, policemen's batons, concentration camps, bullet, bayonet and aerial bomb against the men and women of their own nation. They will calmly starve a million miners and their families into submission as in 1926. There is almost nothing they will not do.

Transfer that from the home to the battlefield—to the arena of international conflict. Threatened by the greed of rival exploiters in foreign countries the capitalist class will drown the world in four years of blood and slaughter. They will destroy human lives by the million, rather than give up their property, their right to exploit the workers, to the capitalists of a rival power.

In short, as far as the capitalists are concerned, they have something to lose which is of the utmost value. They will go to the utmost limit to keep what they have.

What of the workers? They have almost nothing to lose, except their lives and their health, and these they lose in war: not in the outcome of war, but in war itself, whatever the outcome. The working class have no interest at stake which warrants their supporting war. Whatever strength they have to influence the issue of war and peace should be thrown against war, no matter what the circumstances of the particular conflict may be. The question put by war-makers, "Are you in favour of peace at any price?" has no meaning to a worker who understands his class position. The price of losing a war or of surrendering without waging war is not paid by the working class, but by the capitalist class. What difference does it make to the working class whether the British or the German or the American ruling class own the colonial lands and dominate the world's trade and shipping? Will they be poor, or suffer from unemployment? Indeed they will, for they do already everywhere.

The workers then should throw their weight against war. What does this mean in practice? As the working class have not yet placed themselves in control of the machinery of government, but continue at each election to place the capitalists in control, the latter are in a position to decide when, where and why the armed forces shall be set in motion, and also the amount and nature of the armed forces. The question the capitalists have to consider when deciding whether or not to wage war over any particular international conflict is the probable consequences to themselves. These include the military probabilities, personal danger (from air-raids, etc.), and also the effect war will have on the workers. If the working class, or any large body of them, are hostile to the war the capitalists have to consider how to overcome that hostility and what will be the result if they should fail to do so. To the extent that the workers in any country are alive to their interests and opposed to war the capitalists will be inclined to make some concession to the enemy Government, rather than face war. A majority of workers will, however, never be in favour of peace against capitalist wishes while they (the workers) are prepared to support capitalist government, because they will always be ready to accept capitalist reasons for waging a particular war.

The answer to the specific questions put by our correspondent are therefore as follows:—

The S.P.G.B., having no control over the formation or use of the armed forces now controlled by the capitalist class, cannot affect and has no concern with the purely capitalist question whether the British capitalists should have more

armaments to protect their property against the British workers and the foreign capitalist powers.

The S.P.G.B., in line with working-class interests, is not concerned with the outcome of any war between capitalist groups over the right to appropriate the proceeds of the exploitation of the working class.

The S.P.G.B. knows that war means death, maiming and disease to the working class and, knowing that wars between capitalist groups do not involve any working-class interest does not support such wars in any circumstances whatever.

The S.P.G.B. has one object—Socialism—and to attain that object knows that the organised working class must gain control of the machinery of government, including the armed forces. When such control has been achieved the working class will know how to use the armed forces for so long as it may be necessary to defend Socialism against an insurrectionary minority or an undefeated foreign group of capitalists. ED. COMM.

## Socialists and Pacts with Capitalist Parties

IN our April issue we replied to a letter written by Mr. W. J. Last, in which he gave his reasons for thinking that Socialists should join with the Labour Party and should support Trade Union struggles. We replied, pointing out that the differences between Socialists and the Labour Party are fundamental, and that the S.P.G.B. does support the efforts of the workers on the economic field.

We have now received a letter from "United Front" continuing the discussion. The writer, having failed to grasp what we replied to Mr. Last, repeats the advice that the S.P.G.B. should support struggles with the employers over wages, and tells us that "to deny that this is an integral part of the class struggle is to relegate that struggle to text books and arguments." If "United Front" would read again the reply to Mr. Last, or would read any of the numerous pronouncements made by the S.P.G.B. in the past 32 years he would know that we do not deny that that is an integral part of the class struggle. On the contrary, we have on several occasions made a special point of criticising that school of thought which maintains that it is not part of the class struggle, but only a "commodity struggle," like the haggling between buyers and sellers of other commodities, and which, consequently, believes that the term "class-struggle" should only be applied to the class-conscious minority of organised Socialists. So much for that.

The rest of "United Front's" letter is as follows:—

Can we deny that valuable reforms and concessions have been wrung from the ruling class with the collaboration of sections of the master class? Obviously, such privileges as the franchise, social insurance, free education, etc., are partly the work of petty bourgeois elements supported at times by sections of the ruling class itself. If the ruling class is divided on the question of peace or war we cannot say that this is a matter of indifference to the working class. The very weakness of the ruling class, its fundamental contradiction that makes its downfall inevitable is the conflict of interests within it. How then can you maintain in Point 7 of your Declaration that the interests of the working class are *diametrically* opposed to all other interests?

Every concession gained by the workers strengthens their consciousness of their power and their need for unity. At the same time it prepares them for making fresh demands and, weakening the ruling class, makes the latter less able to concede them. Then and therefore comes the time when the working class, conscious of its power, makes a demand which the weakened and demoralised ruling class cannot grant. A reformist demand thereby becomes a *revolutionary* demand, as the workers, united, see the impotence of the ruling class and realise that they can seize power and thus solve their problems themselves.

In your reply to Comrade Last's letter and in your Declaration of Principles you ignore the contradictions implicit in the capitalist system which must be exploited by conscious revolutionaries to bring about a downfall of the régime. As Comrade Last points out, failure to co-operate with Labour and other parties in a reformist policy because of abstract "Socialist" principles can only strengthen the reactionaries and demoralise the working class.

The role of a Marxist is to aid and direct the class struggle on every front—not to start a private war of his own against everybody.—Yours faithfully, UNITED FRONT.

The argument here is a hotch-potch of half-truths and false assumptions that need only be pointed out for their nature to be revealed.

In order to prove that Socialists ought to join with the Labour Party, "United Front" tells us that the franchise, social insurance, and free education are "valuable reforms," gained with the collaboration of sections of the master class. He overlooks the fact that the greater part of these reform measures was gained *before* the Labour Party came into existence. Consequently, if they prove anything they prove that the Labour Party should never have been formed at all and that the still earlier policy of playing off Liberals and Tories against each other should have been continued. Then "United Front" leaves out of account the major aspect of some, if not all, reform measures. He assumes they were won because they were valuable to the workers. The truth is they were, in many instances, *forced* on workers and capitalist minority alike, because they were valuable to the dominant section of the capitalist class. When, as in the case of the Trade Union Law in 1927, the capitalists have wanted to go back on changes formerly introduced, not all the wailings of all the reformist parties together made the slightest difference.

"United Front" tells us that "we cannot say" that the issue of peace and war "is a matter

*Continued in col. 2, page 119.*



## Outdoor Propaganda Meetings

SUNDAYS		2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Cock Hotel, East Ham	8 p.m.	Reginald	Nesbitt	Cash	Bellingham	Grainger
Brockwell Park	6 p.m.	Grainger	Kohn	Turner	Jacobs	Bellingham
Clapham Common	7 p.m.	Cash	Cameron, J.	Reginald	Hayden	Banks
Regents Park	11.30 a.m.	Robins	Turner	Grainger	Cash	Willmott
Finsbury Park	6 p.m.	Lestor	Turner	Bellingham	Kohn	Willmott
Victoria Park	5.30 p.m.	Bellingham	Grainger	Willmott	Ambridge	Turner
Whipps Cross	8 p.m.	Berry, V.	Lestor	Ross	Grainger	Manion
Queens Road, Bayswater	8 p.m.	Willmott	Bellingham	Nesbitt	Cameron, J.	Ambridge
Forest Gate, Forest Road	8 p.m.	Jacobs	Cash	Lestor	Manion	Reginald
SATURDAYS		1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Rushcroft Road	7.30 p.m.	Turner	Kohn	Cash	Nesbitt	Willmott
Roper Street, Eltham	7.30 p.m.	Reginald	—	Turner	—	Manion
Undine St., Tooting	8 p.m.	Banks	Turner	Ross	Reginald	Nesbitt
MONDAYS		WEDNESDAYS				
Highbury Corner	8 p.m.	East Avenue, High Street North,				
Ilford Station	8 p.m.	East Ham				
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	8 p.m.	Avenue Road, Lewisham				
Ridley Road, Dalston, E.	8 p.m.	Fulbourne Street, E.				
		Deanery Road, Stratford, E.				

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from June 10th, over "Ralphs Café," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding (Dues Sec.), "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays each month at 8 p.m., at Craigwell Cafe, Peter Street. Public invited. Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., A. Miller, 14, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E.2.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month at 8.30 p.m., Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

*The advocates  
of violence in  
the workers' .  
movement are  
already half-  
Fascist —  
False friends  
and potential  
enemies. . . .*

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London, September, 1936

[Monthly. Twopence

## THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

**T**HE civil war, which began with the revolt on July 18th, is, at the time of writing, still dragging on without either side having gained decisive victory. What the outcome will be it is still impossible to say, for the issue depends to a great extent on the assistance given to the rebels by foreign governments. Before examining the struggle from the Socialist standpoint, we may pay tribute to the conduct of the Spanish workers. Believing that a vital principle was at stake, they rallied to the Government against a powerful revolt backed by the greater part of the armed forces. Workers, with little or no military training, stood up to trained and experienced soldiers. On the one side was all the advantage of organisation and

equipment, and on the other the enthusiasm and voluntary discipline of a popular movement. It is true that large sections of the military forces remained loyal to the Government, but even these were hampered by treason and sabotage among the officers. Only the untrained volunteer militias were thoroughly dependable. The Madrid corre-

spondent of the *Economist* (London, August 15th, 1936) was moved to admiration, and wrote: "The splendid way in which the citizens of Madrid rushed to arms was a fine page in the history of democracy."

He pointed out something else deserving of notice:—

As far as Madrid is concerned, discipline has been excellent. In the early days, when almost every working man in Madrid had a rifle in hand, the jewellers' shops were open as usual, with their windows full of valuables, without the slightest attempt at theft being registered.

If the workers attacked churches, "that was," he said, "because of the close political connection between the clericals and the Conservatives."

So much for the conduct of the Spanish workers. What of the wisdom of their action in rallying to a purely capitalist government in order to defend it against a military, aristocratic and clerical rebellion?

### The Need for Democracy

It has always been recognised by Socialists that it is necessary for the workers to gain the vote, so that they may be able to place themselves democratically in control of the machinery of government. Marx was one who recognised this.

At first sight the Spanish struggle appears to be simply a struggle of this kind, and many people have indeed represented it to be. When, however, all the facts are taken into account, the position is by no means simple and straight-forward.

The recent political history of Spain dates from 1931, when the Monarchical Government was overthrown, undermined by its own corruption and decay. At the first democratic election the

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Spanish Labourites (the so-called Socialist Party) obtained 117 seats out of 470, and three of their representatives entered the first provisional Government in coalition with various other parties. The Government introduced a number of important pieces of legislation providing for the division of the big landed estates among the land-workers and peasants, the disestablishment of the Catholic Church, divorce laws, an educational system to remove the appalling illiteracy, and the grant of a wide measure of autonomy to Catalonia. The last-named law is to be explained largely by the fact that Catalonia contains (in and around Barcelona) a big share of Spain's industrial concerns, the owners of which have interests opposed to those of the land-owners, the Catholic organisations, the military cliques and the Conservative traders of Seville and elsewhere. The aim of the Republican Government, in brief, was to change the constitution and governmental system of Spain in the direction of capitalist development. From the first they faced the wealthy, powerful and ruthless opposition both of the representatives of the old order, who are able to appeal to the ignorance of the priest-ridden sections of the population, 60 per cent. of which is rural, and also of new groups preaching some kind of Fascism, who can attract quite a number of idealistic young people with promises of the rebirth of a unified powerful Spain.

The Coalition Government did not last for long. The Monarchists and military groups recovered their courage, and, at the same time, dissension arose between the Labourites and other workers' groups, and the frankly capitalist parties. The latter felt that they no longer had need to rely on the organised workers and pay a certain price for their support.

At the General Election in November, 1933, the Labourites lost heavily and came back with only 61 seats.

The next development was an abortive military revolt by workers' organisations and Catalan separatists in October, 1934, in answer to the inclusion of three Catholics of Fascist sympathies in the Cabinet. As was inevitable, the revolt was crushed by the Government without difficulty, but with great brutality. Some 30,000 workers were imprisoned and held there throughout 1935. Indeed they were not released until the victory of the "Popular Front" at the election in February, 1936, the indignation caused by their imprisonment and ill-treatment being one of the factors which helped the Popular Front to win.

#### The Popular Front at the General Election, February, 1936

The reasons for the electoral victory of the Popular Front were many, but outstanding among them were the following. First, dissatisfaction with the results of two years of Conservative-Catholic rule, and the disclosure of financial

scandals affecting members of the Government. Then the fact that the reforms begun by the first Republican administration were not only not carried through but had been largely undone. Most important of all, however, was the electoral pact between a number of organisations hitherto bitterly hostile to each other. The Popular Front consisted of the following large or fair-sized parties, together with several smaller ones (the figures are the seats won at the election in February, 1936): Labourites (about 96), Left Republicans (80), Republican Union (32), Esquerra (Catalonian Party—20), Communists (16). Above all, this was the first time that the Syndicalists, who normally oppose all political action, had voted at an election. Another contributory cause for the Popular Front victory was the shocking poverty of the land-workers, aggravated by wage reductions enforced under the former Government. The Popular Front undertook to raise wages if they got power.

The outcome was that the Popular Front obtained a total of about 265 seats, to 148 for the Right group and 55 for the Centre group. Even so the total votes obtained by Popular Front candidates were slightly fewer than those given to the candidates of the Right and Centre together—4,357,000 to 4,571,000. (*Daily Herald*, February 27th, 1936).

The new Government was entirely a capitalist-Republican one, under Senor Azana of the Left Republican Party. It took office pledged to introduce certain reforms, but without any suggestion of trying or even desiring to help Socialism. As Senor Azana constantly said in his election speeches, "I am not a Socialist and I am not a socialisator." (*Manchester Guardian*, February 27th.)

The Government contained not one Labourite, Communist, Syndicalist, Anarchist or Trotskyite. All its members were avowed supporters of capitalism. In addition to being pledged to carry through the reforms introduced by the first Republican Government, the Azana Government proposed to introduce an income tax and to bring the banking system under Government control.

#### The Government Faces Revolt

No sooner did the Government take office than it received due warning that the military-clerical-Fascist groups would not accept their electoral defeat as in any way binding on them. They do not pretend to have any time for democracy and majority rule, as was admitted by General Franco, leader of the present revolt, to a *News Chronicle* representative on July 28th. When asked "What about the February elections? Didn't they represent the national will?" Franco's contemptuous reply was, "Elections never do." (*News Chronicle*, July 29th, 1936.)

Thus it was that General Franco and General Godet (the latter was executed in Barcelona on August 11th for his part in the new revolt) staged

an unsuccessful rising in February, immediately the election results were known. The revolt was crushed, but the Government, either through negligence or fear, allowed these and other known rebels to continue to occupy influential official positions in Majorca, Morocco and elsewhere, positions which they used to prepare a more powerful rising.

In the five months after taking office, the Azana Government was faced with individual acts of terrorism by military and semi-Fascist organisations, which were replied to in similar way by those workers' organisations which have long preached and practised violence—the Syndicalists and Anarchists. Two culminating incidents were the assassination of Senor Costillo, Lieutenant of the Shock Police, by Fascists, and the counter-assassination of Calvo Sotelo, self-styled future dictator and rebel leader. It is believed that the rebellion was planned for July 25th, but was brought forward a week owing to the assassination of Sotelo.

The rebels took with them the greater part of the army—officered largely by men belonging to the landed aristocracy—and part of the navy. The Government kept the support of most of the air force, part of the navy, some of the rank and file of the army, and the greater part of the Civil Guard (a military police force). The rebels had the backing of the land-owners and the Catholic Church, itself the biggest land-owner of all, and also the backing (probably in advance of the event) of the German and Italian governments, interested in the promise of naval bases in Morocco, the Canary Islands, and Majorca, if Franco won. The *Daily Telegraph* (supporting the rebels) reported that General Franco was building up a new air force during the first weeks of August with "modern German and Italian planes and personnel," and the latest types of German anti-aircraft guns. (*Daily Telegraph*, August 13th, 1936.) The Government in Barcelona unearthed in the headquarters of the German Nazi organisation there evidence of a widespread Nazi organisation in Spain. (*News Chronicle*, August 19th and 20th.)

As regards the objects of the rebels, the rebellion can be described in the main as a landed-class revolt against the agrarian reforms (splitting up of their estates among the land-workers), aided by the Catholic Church, military group, and by organisations with a more or less Fascist outlook. The last-named are, however, at present probably the least important. The rebel movement, as a whole, and even its Fascist wing, bears little resemblance to Italian Fascism and German Nazism, with their popular appeal, fake-Socialist phraseology, and considerable working class support.

The dictatorships in Germany and Italy—and especially Portugal—have other reasons for being interested in the future Government of Spain. Undoubtedly the revival of workers' confidence and activity, expressed in the French stay-in strikes,

the Popular Fronts, and the Spanish militias, are having repercussions in Portugal, and even Italy and Germany. It is probably not a coincidence that extensive wage increases are being granted by Mussolini's Government just now.

#### Spain's Divided Working Class

If the rebels represent more than one point of view, the Popular Front militias are an example of the temporary unity of very divergent forces. Catalan capitalist-Republicans and Catholic-Conservative Basque nationalists join hands with Labourites, who stand for democratic government, constitutional action and social reform, and with Anarchists and Syndicalists who reject political action and the need to capture the State-machine, oppose centralised organisation and favour local self-governing "Communes," and whose traditional methods are sabotage, insurrection by strikes, and gunman tactics. In addition there are Communists and Trotskyites, bitterly opposed to each other but agreed in favouring a strong centralised State based on dictatorship.

As regards relative strengths of the workers' groups, the General Union of Workers (U.G.T.), which supports the Labourites, has about 1½ million adherents, and is the strongest trade union organisation everywhere, except in Barcelona. Their political reflection, the Labourites (themselves divided into "Left" and "Right" Wings), are the strongest party in Parliament, with about 96 members. (The next largest was the C.E.D.A., led by the Conservative Gil Robles.)

The Anarcho-Syndicalist National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) has about 500,000 members. Although it has recently grown, it is far below its former strength. Its great stronghold is Barcelona.

Communists and Trotskyites each have perhaps 50,000 members. The Anarchists, especially in Catalonia, have their own organisation with a large following.

These fundamental divergences of aim and method naturally have serious consequences. In the first place, their very existence was a factor which emboldened the rebels and encouraged them to launch their attack. They calculated, not without reason, that such a mixed Popular Front would soon show signs of disintegration. Dissensions have indeed occurred. The Syndicalists, while reluctantly supporting the "Front" at the elections, and joining the militias, still declined to collaborate with capitalist bodies in the government of Catalonia. (*Manchester Guardian*, August 8th.) Also, being strongly opposed to the idea of dictatorship, they mistrust and are hostile to the Communists and Trotskyites. Even in the midst of the civil war the leader of the dockers in the General Workers' Union at Barcelona was assassinated with two of his colleagues. As they were Labour Party sympathisers, and had a long-



standing quarrel with the Anarcho-Syndicalist C.N.T., it was taken for granted that the latter were settling old scores. (*Manchester Guardian*, August 7th.) The past history of the murderous antagonisms between these bodies would make such an action by no means surprising. The Labour Unions protested and were met with threats of violence. It may be mentioned that the Anarcho-Syndicalists have no reason to love the so-called "Socialist" Party, which coquetted with the dictator Primo de Rivera when he was suppressing them ten years ago.

(In passing, it is interesting to notice the remark of a *Times* correspondent that the customary discipline of the Labourites and Communists in the militias made them more effective as fighting men than the Syndicalists and Anarchists, whose disbelief in organisation resulted in their suffering great losses in action.—*Times*, August 6th.)

The Trotskyites continued to deride Parliament, criticise the Government and demand a dictatorship.

The disunity of method, organisation and object of the Spanish workers are important from another point of view. We may readily grant, with Marx, that workers seeking democracy have an interest in striving, as well as the capitalists, to overthrow military, Monarchical or autocratic Government, but Marx certainly never envisaged a situation in which not only were the workers' groups bitterly hostile to each other, but many of them (in Spain possibly a majority) are not aiming at democracy at all, having no inclination for it. Should the Communists or Trotskyites gain power they would, as in Russia, promptly and ruthlessly suppress democracy, and along with it the Labourites, Syndicalists and Anarchists. The latter two groups, whatever Government is in power, will continue to do their utmost by strikes, sabotage, and even assassination, to destroy it, even at the cost of producing chaos.

The truth is—and the Spanish workers have got to learn it before they can hope to make progress in organising for the conquest of power for Socialism—that Socialism is at present absolutely out of the question, and that their only present hope is for the right to organise and carry on Socialist propaganda under capitalist democracy. Trying to go beyond this (or in the case of the Anarcho-Syndicalists, trying to go backwards) by means of armed revolts, and so on, will gain nothing except disillusionment, and will not help the working class or the Socialist movement.

#### Things to be Remembered

For reasons of space, it is impossible to deal at length with many important aspects of the struggle, but certain points and certain facts deserve to be touched upon or recorded.

First, there were the atrocity stories and the outrageous misrepresentations of sections of the

English Press, notably the Rothermere organs, and *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*.

Lord Rothermere's journals openly sided with the rebels, whom they described as patriots and Christians. His *Evening News* (August 4th) actually charged the "Reds" with being responsible for plunging Spain into a "blood bath." By the "Reds" it meant the Spanish capitalist-Republican Government, but the Rothermere press consistently hid the facts of that Government's composition. The same paper (August 3rd) demanded a Fascist victory as the only way of "saving" Spain, and justified the rebellion on the extraordinary plea that the Government's defensive measures against the rebels ("orgy of slaughter and rapine") would have been launched "whether there had been a Fascist rising or not."

Needing to hide the fact that the rebels were largely dependent on Mohammedan Moors in the Foreign Legion and Riff regiments, trained in savage fighting methods, in order to bolster up the claim that the rebels represented Christianity the *Evening News* (August 8th) avoided disclosing that they were Moors. Instead they were described as Franco's "men from Morocco."

*The Times*, with typical craft, dodged standing frankly as the supporter of rebels against a democratically elected Government by maintaining—without any evidence—that the conflict was bound to result in "a despotism either of the Left or of the Right," and that the Government side was becoming "violently Marxist" (*Times*, July 29th); this in spite of the fact that its own correspondent was well enough informed to know, as everybody else knows, that the Anarcho-Syndicalists are anti-Marxists (August 11th), and in spite of *The Times*' own admission (July 29th) that "Perhaps a majority" of the Government's armed supporters were neither Labourites nor Anarcho-Syndicalists, but "members of less extreme groups," i.e., capitalist-Republicans, Catholic-Nationalists, or pure and simple democrats.

Another *Times* trick was to describe the rebels as "anti-Government troops," and the Government troops as "an armed mob." (See *Times*, August 1st.)

Such misrepresentation, extending in the Rothermere Press to unashamed lying, is what the workers may always expect from some at least of the organs of capitalist interests.

Two important points which emerge from the struggle relate to the importance of having control of the machinery of Government, which has been consistently stressed by the S.P.G.B. In Vienna in February, 1934, and in Spain in October, 1934, workers' armed revolts against the Government were easily crushed. In Spain, even if the Government is eventually defeated owing to the intervention of Italy and Germany, enough has happened to show that control of the machinery of Government would have gained the day against the rebels, even though

they were backed by a large part of the military forces.

The second point is that we can see from Spain how easy it would have been to crush Fascism in Italy in 1922 if the Italian Government at that time had wanted to—which, of course, it did not. Mussolini's rabble could have been dispersed in a few hours, as the military authorities there said at the time.

The dependence of the Spanish rebels on outside aid and the inability of the international working class to give any effective assistance to the Government is worth noting. Collections of money (insignificant in amount except that arranged in Russia by the Government) can make little difference in such a case.

This brings us to the utter futility of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Aware, in spite of themselves, of their impotence, all they could do, apart from making collections, was to appeal for the summoning of Parliament, which they so often declared to be useless (*Daily Worker*, August 8th); appeal for the sending of a co-operative food ship, which the Co-operative Societies refused to do; appeal to the Tory Government to help the Spanish Government (they called it "demanding and resolving to enforce our will that the National Government shall give to the elected People's Government of Spain the help it needs."

*Daily Worker*, August 10th); and to demand "a mighty campaign everywhere in Britain. Meetings, meetings, meetings in streets and halls and schools . . . resolutions, protests, collections for the Spanish people . . . writing to the local Press, to the local Council, to the local M.P.s" (*Daily Worker*, August 11th.) In other words no action of any moment, but simply endless varieties of talk. What we witnessed here was a repetition of the Communist Party's futile gestures of help for Abyssinia. Perhaps the crowning absurdity of the Communists, in view of the League fiasco over Abyssinia, was that they proposed calling the League in to "help" Spain!

#### Atrocity-Mongering

It is impossible to deny that cruelties, apart from the destruction of the war itself, occurred on both sides. In view, however, of the one-sided or lying reports in many organs of the English Press the following statements are worth recording. It cannot be doubted that the rebels deliberately perpetrated far more ghastly atrocities than anything the Government militias were guilty of as acts of revenge or reprisal.

When Moorish troops captured Badajoz they slaughtered 2,000 Government troops in cold blood, or, as their commander, Colonel Yaque, said: "Perhaps not quite as many as that." (*News-Chronicle*, August 17th.)

*The Daily Telegraph* (August 15th) reported from their own correspondent that the rebels at

the Montana barracks, in Madrid, three times showed the white flag of surrender and each time opened fire under cover of it on the Government forces which came to accept the surrender.

Reuters' correspondent (*Daily Herald*, July 28th) was told by a rebel legionary that they had "been strictly instructed not to take any prisoners but to cut off the heads of all Communists."

Jay Allen, *News-Chronicle* correspondent (August 12th), stated that the rebel Foreign Legion "are leaving a trail of blood and villages in ruin behind them."

*The Times* correspondent at Malaga reported (August 8th) that 900 Royalist and other rebel prisoners there "are not only safe but in tolerable comfort." Only some five or six, after summary trial, had been shot.

On August 14th the British colony in Madrid sent a telegram to the English Foreign Office indignantly repudiating "hysterical stories published in the British Press by refugees from here." The telegram was signed by six business men, and said that none of the British colony had ever been in the slightest danger. Reuters' Madrid correspondent reported (*Manchester Guardian*, August 15th): "there have been, as far as anyone knows, no atrocities here." The same, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, was true of Malaga. The B.B.C. had repeated refugee stories, alleging numerous atrocities at Malaga, but when the *Guardian's* special correspondent in Andalusia investigated he "found them to be untrue."

One other incident deserves to be recorded. Mr. Winston Churchill wrote an article on Spain in the *Evening Standard* on August 10th. In it he made the interesting admission that in his view a constitutional, parliamentary Government is only deserving of allegiance if it "prove itself capable of preserving law and order, and protecting life, freedom and property" (italics ours).

We think we are not misrepresenting this capitalist politician's outlook when we read into it that he claims the right to stage a pro-capitalism rebellion when a Socialist majority have obtained control of Parliament in a constitutional way. Socialists will remember this.

Regarding the future of Spain it can be said with certainty that whichever side wins the present civil war, the matter will not end at once. The defeated will be awaiting a further opportunity of appealing to arms. Also it may be taken for granted that whether the Government forces or the rebels come out on top they will seek to disarm the workers.

It need hardly be added that the only ultimate solution for class-conflict and unrest in Spain, as elsewhere, lies in Socialism. H.

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## The Lesson of the Russian Trial

**R**USSIA is in the news again with another spectacular trial, and one that has a particular meaning for those who are not blind to the nature of the development of Russia under Stalin's leadership.

The victims of the present trial must be nearly the last of the "old guard" of the Bolshevik movement that engineered the uprising of 1917 which, under Lenin and Trotsky, was heralded as the beginning of a world revolution to inaugurate Socialism by means of dictatorships.

Nearly twenty years have passed since then, and these years have made it quite clear that Lenin and his associates were pursuing a chimera that has had a disheartening influence upon the working-class movement everywhere.

At the moment of writing, the main trial is over, the prisoners having been executed. The published reports contain certain important points that merit notice.

The first staggering thing that strikes one after reading the reports, is the way the defendants admit their guilt and go out of their way to paint themselves as black as possible—this appears to be no curiosity in Russia when the ruling clique proceeds against opponents. The nature and wording of the admissions are so utterly ridiculous that none but the interested or the dream-sodden can take them seriously—yet they have been treated seriously by newspapers that must know better. The *Sunday Observer*, for August 23rd, ends its report with the remark:

"It is futile to think that the trial was staged and the charges trumped up. The Government's case against the defendants is genuine."

Yet immediately under this is the following paragraph, which gives a key to the whole business:

MOSCOW, Saturday.

The extraordinary Congress of Soviets, which is to adopt the draft of the new Constitution for Russia, prepared by the Stalin Committee set up for the purpose, will meet in Moscow at the end of November.

The forthcoming three months' purge of oppositionists, which is already in full swing, will probably be the most thorough of all the Soviet purges, so that at the Congress it can be announced that the internal enemy has been exterminated.—Exchange.

Before commenting on the above we would point to the strange fact that even the *Daily Herald*, which was sceptical in the case of the British-Vicker's Engineers in 1933, raised no doubt about the genuineness of the charges during the early part of the present case.

The trial is quite evidently a fake and designed to get out of the way all who might use the new Russian Constitution to put forward policies at variance with those of the clique at the head of affairs. The new constitution that was given to the world as an example of the stability of the Bolshevik regime is more likely an instance of the growing weakness of Stalin's position. In spite of the safeguards put into it, Stalin is taking precautions that dissatisfied elements shall not be able to make use of it against him—he is trying to put them out of temptation altogether! Whatever freedom of voice or vote the new constitution may allow, it must only be a freedom to support Stalin and his henchmen.

Now let us glance at some of the statements made by Kamenev, one of the principal of the accused, as reported in the *News Chronicle* for August 21st—all the papers give similar reports:

The defendants are accused of a terrorist conspiracy aimed at assassinating Stalin and other Soviet leaders and overturning the present Soviet regime.

In answers to questions, Kamenev told the court that he was organising the conspiracy and that articles he had written in 1932 professing loyalty to the Communist Party were "frauds."

He was asked by Vishinsky, the prosecutor:

"Were you a bloodthirsty enemy of the Soviet Union?"

The *News Chronicle* gives his reply in the following words:

"I was a bloodthirsty enemy," replied Kamenev. (Laughter.)

That parenthesis is suggestive. Either Kamenev is treating the matter sarcastically or he has been cowed. It is a tragic-comedy and the court knows it.

He is also reported to have made the following remarks in the course of a long statement:

"Yes, I lied often since I started the struggle with the Bolshevik Party. I went all the way from opposition, through counter-revolution, to terrorism—actually to Fascism, because Trotskyism plus terrorism is Fascism."

The above, from a man of undoubted intelligence, supposed to be on trial for his life is too patently absurd to impose upon any but the most gullible adherents of Bolshevism. All the statements at the trial bear upon them the marks of Government inspiration. The plot is even alleged to have originated in Berlin. No wonder Trotsky said, "Moscow must believe the world is full of idiots," when interviewed on the matter.

The list of accused shows how ruthless Stalin is in his intention to rout out all likely rivals.

Among those concerned are men who held or have held controlling positions in the Soviet Union, such as Zinoviev (reported to be dying of consumption), Bukharin, Tomskey (reported by the *Communist Party* to have committed suicide), Rykov, Pyntakov, Sokolnikov, Serebryakov and Uglanov. If it is true, as the Stalin group contend, that these first-class Soviet leaders have betrayed the Soviet movement, and are even the inspired agents of Germany, then Russia is evidently a breeding-ground for people who throw overboard their opposition to capitalism. That being so, the question may well be asked what essential difference is there between Russia and ordinary capitalist states that throw up similar types?

A point worth noting in passing is that while the trial was taking place and these erstwhile Bolshevik stalwarts were the subject of virulent attacks, Mr. Attlee, the leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party here, was on a visit to Russia and was being pleasantly entertained by one of Stalin's subordinates. Not long ago, the Conservative Minister, Mr. Eden, was given an enthusiastic reception. The accused are representatives of a band which, however, mistaking their tactics, stood for opposition to world capitalism—but that was a long time ago!

One allegation is that one of the accused prepared a bomb and arranged with student supporters of Trotsky that they were to throw the bomb while marching past Stalin in the Red Square. This is a very significant statement and corroborates previous evidence that bitter dissatisfaction with the Soviet regime exists amongst the youth of Russia. When one takes into account the complete control of youthful education by the Russian Government, one is forced to the conclusion that there must be something radically wrong with affairs there when its youthful products are prepared to risk liberty and life by engaging in assassination projects.

Perhaps the crowning piece of humour that gave the keynote to the comedy was the statement by one of the accused, Holzman, made diffidently, that the secret code was contained in the book the "Arabian Nights." The whole business suggests a piece out of the "Arabian Nights Entertainment"! Trotsky declares it to be the biggest frame-up since the Nazi Reichstag fire trial.

Another curiosity worth remarking is that ten of the sixteen accused are Jews. Is this an accident or is Russia going in for the other purging fashion? This should give Jewish Communists abroad something to think over!

Trotsky is alleged to be the fountain head of the conspiracy and the prosecution is aimed at him and those that are alleged to side with him. It is reputed to be a final attempt to destroy what is called the Trotsky opposition movement.

To those who are prepared to examine the matter dispassionately it is quite obvious that a

conspiracy such as described by the prosecution is quite out of line with Trotsky's record. It is too foolish and out of touch with the ideas for which he has always fought. Trotsky and Stalin are quite different types (one has knowledge and the other ruthless cunning) and stand for entirely different programmes.

Before the Bolshevik uprising Trotsky was opposed to the view that Russia could jump from semi-feudalism into Socialism, but Lenin persuaded him against his judgment. The line taken in 1917 by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky led where it was bound to lead—to an abortion. When the retreat from the original aim of the movement was gaining momentum (after Lenin died) Trotsky wished to stop the drift but here he came up against Stalin, who was prepared to hang on to power at any cost and had little interest in theoretical questions. Stalin had already dug himself into the bureaucratic side of the Russian movement and he was able to push Trotsky out of all positions that gave him any power—and finally to push him out of Russia altogether.

The Trotsky movement has been an attempt to bring Russian policy back to its starting point. Stalin has resisted this and has been cunning enough to set his rivals against each other and then lop them off one by one. Permanent compromise with world capitalism is the summit of Stalin's achievement.

Russia offers a valuable object lesson to those interested in Popular Fronts. A good deal of its history since 1917 has been taken up with the internal struggles of different groups, in which contest the more ruthless groups have been successful. The "Old Guard" have now nearly completed the eating of each other. If in Spain and other countries the Communists are successful then, as the Communists have indicated in their propaganda, the eating process will begin, for the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," according to the Communist idea, is but the struggle of cliques for power to suppress rival cliques. GILMAC.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

SEPTEMBER



1936

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## The Truth About the Popular Front

**A**MIDST the heated argument for and against the formation of a "Popular Front" of Liberals, Labour Party and Communists in Great Britain, one very significant aspect has been entirely overlooked. Having their eyes fixed on the question which appears to them to be so important at the moment, the advocates of uniting the parties on a strictly limited programme of popular demands have not noticed that their action is a tardy admission of a fundamental mistake made by the British and Continental workers 30 or 40 years ago. At that date, more especially in Great Britain, the workers were faced with two great capitalist parties, the Tories and the Liberals. Because the latter represented very largely the interests of industrial capitalists, they had stood traditionally for democratic government against the earlier undemocratic rule of landed property and the small number of ruling class families. With the extension of the franchise to the workers, both Liberals and Tories had to busy themselves with questions of social reform. Nevertheless it was the Liberals who were associated, more or less justifiably, with the two ideas of democracy and social reform, and for many years before (and even after) the formation of the I.L.P. and Labour Party the notion persisted that the workers must look to Liberal governments for the defence of democracy and the extension of reform legislation. Mr. Lloyd George's campaigns for political and social reforms in the years before the War were a case in point.

Needless to say, the results were disappointing for the workers. Capitalism cannot be made to work satisfactorily from the point of view of the exploited class. It was therefore inevitable that more and more workers should turn their attention to other methods of securing working class emancipation or at least relief from the worst evils of capitalism. It was here that a disastrous mistake was made. What was the need of the times? Two answers were given to that question. The Labour leaders said, "Form a new party of democracy and social reform," which meant in effect forming a new Liberal Party. The S.P.G.B. pointed this out and warned against it. We said—and who will dispute it now?—that unless the new party was to be a Socialist party, composed of Socialists and fighting for Socialism, the workers might just as well go on as they were. Why spend a lifetime breaking up one Liberal Party only to form another?

Events have proved us right, but they have done something more. Without realising it, the advocates of the Popular Front are trying to undo their own handiwork. They are trying to reconstitute a great mass party, able to win a majority at an election, and based on the two pillars of democracy and social reform! They are trying to reconstitute the great Liberal Party which they smashed to form the Labour Party.

Their argument is a plausible one. "Things are bad for the workers economically," they say, "and democracy is in great peril. Let us then unite to save the latter and introduce social reforms to relieve the former." But who put democracy in danger? In recent years it has been the Communists above all others, yet they are now most vociferous in demanding a United Front to save it. It was the Russian Communists who set the modern fashion of seizing power and installing a dictatorship. It is undisputed that Mussolini, and after him Hitler, learned much from Lenin in the technique of seizing power and holding it by force, supported by mass propaganda and political suppression.

It was the Communists who, year in and year out, derided democratic Government, poured scorn on Parliament and the whole parliamentary system, preached Minority revolt and civil war, and in every way idealised the method of violence. Everywhere that their propaganda penetrated they left a trail of hostility to parliamentary methods and a liking for the pseudo-progressive system of armed force and dictatorship.

Let there be no mistake about this. When Mr. Gallacher, for the Communist Party, writes, as he did in *Forward* (25th July, 1936), that the Communists did not mean "military violence or military revolutionary action," Mr. Gallacher is a liar. The original basis of the Communist International (the "Twenty-one Points") prescribed an "armed struggle," and "heavy civil war" was the favourite catchword. But we have more recent

*Continued on page 138*

## The Mining Disaster

**O**NCE again an English mining town has been stricken by a tragic disaster, this time Barnsley. In the early hours of Friday, August 7th, at the Wharnccliffe, Woodmoor Colliery, occurred one of the worst explosions this country has known. Fifty-eight men who had gone down the mine to work returned—but to the mortuary: their bodies twisted and battered beyond recognition. The wives, children and dependants who gathered at the pithead had one—though pitiful—consolation: death was swift. Unlike many previous disasters, the victims were not buried alive for days to suffer the tortures of lingering deaths.

There is hardly a year in which there is not a big disaster or series of accidents in the mines. They have come to be taken for granted. The miners accept the risk they run, inevitably, as men who have to earn their daily bread. They receive neither medals nor decorations, which such risks would bring in other spheres. Rather, their earnings are almost the lowest among organised workers.

Can mining be made safe, or safer, so that the risk of the loss of life through accidents may become non-existent or at least very much reduced? Responsible and professional opinion says that it can, as the following from the *Daily Telegraph* (July 29th) shows. Reporting the proceedings of the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines, sitting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, the evidence of Mr. Arthur Roberts, President of the Colliery Under-Managers of Great

Britain, is given as follows:—

If the provisions of the Coal Mines Act, with the accompanying regulations and orders, were consistently carried out by all the parties concerned, he said, there would be a big drop in the accident rate. This particularly applied to accidents caused by falls of roof and sides, haulage and machinery.

And again, the evidence of a Government inspector in the same newspaper on the same day:—

Nearly half the colliery accidents in the North-Western Division last year could have been avoided, states the Divisional Inspector of Mines, Mr. W. J. Charlton, in his report issued yesterday.

He reports that 99 persons were killed and 322 injured during the year in the division, which contains the coal-fields of Lancashire and Cheshire, North Staffs and North Wales.

Falls of ground accounted for 54 of the deaths, and Mr. Charlton calls attention to the "disturbing increase" in the number of accidents from falls of side at the working face.

Here is opinion from two independent and opposing sources that mining could at least have been made safer to the extent that nearly fifty per cent. of the accidents in a certain period could have been avoided if "the provisions of the Coal Mines Act" had been "carried out." Why were they not carried out? It is doubtful whether that question will be heard outside a Royal Commission of Inquiry. It is a measure of the ethical standards of capitalism that the complete resources of its

scientifically equipped police force, supported by immense funds, would be set in motion to track down an homicidal maniac, yet expert opinion, which says that negligence has caused workers'

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

reporting the proceedings of the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines, sitting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, the evidence of Mr. Arthur Roberts, President of the Colliery Under-Managers of Great



deaths, is just quietly reported. There are no screaming headlines; no Scotland Yard sleuths to fix culpability for the slaughter.

It has often been argued that the cost of making some mines safe is prohibitive; that the result would be less profits and the inability to compete with fellow-capitalists in the markets, or no profits. Mark this, fellow-workers in the mines: Profits—but twisted and battered bodies and widows and fatherless children. No profits or less profits and less of these appalling and tragic "visitations from God"—which? If the choice were between these two simple alternatives then capitalism would choose—the first.

That is the tragedy.

When society is organised to produce things for use only, instead of for profit, then will risk to life in daily work be reduced to its minimum, and human life, health and well-being, be looked upon as society's first duty.

H. W.

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE POPULAR FRONT

(Continued from page 136.)

evidence from Communists, indeed from Mr. Gallacher himself. At the 1929 Conference of the Communist Party of Great Britain, Mr. Harry Pollitt made a speech in which he explained to his fellow Communists that "only through armed insurrection can the workers gain power" (see report in *Manchester Guardian*, December 2nd, 1929). At the same conference, Mr. Gallacher, who now pretends that armed revolt was not intended, said this:—

They had talked of a Revolutionary Workers' Government, but did they realise what was implied? Would the organisation of the workers for the revolutionary Government be a legal one? The task of fighting for a revolutionary Government would be a task of bringing the workers out on to the streets against the armed forces of capitalism."—(*Worker's Life*, December 6th, 1929.)

While the Communists are explaining away the above proclamations of their intention to stage armed revolt, let them also try to justify, if they can, their complete somersault with regard to association with the Liberal and Labour parties. Mr. Gallacher now declares his willingness to work with the Liberals. Only a year ago, at the 7th World Congress of the Communist International, when G. Dimitrov presented a report on "The Working Class against Fascism," that report specifically mentions the need, while supporting the Labour Party, to oppose Lloyd George, the Liberal leader. (Report published by Communist Party of Great Britain, p. 36.) Even more amazing, however, is the change of front towards the Labour Party and Labour Government. At the 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held in November, 1932, a report was considered called "The Crisis Policy of the Labour Party, the T.U.C.,

etc." In this interesting declaration of Communist policy we read that the policy of the Labour Government in 1929-1931 was not only "capitalist" but also "Fascist," and that "the Labour Party took decisive steps towards strengthening the dictatorship of the capitalists during the Labour Government." Also that, while opposing the means test in words, the Labour Party "supported the attacks of the National Government upon the unemployed."

Then we are told that "parliamentary democracy" is a "sham" which the Communists must expose, and that:—

Any party which accepts parliamentary democracy, however revolutionary its phrases, is an instrument of the capitalists.

Lastly, the Report tells us:—

It is unmistakably clear that a third Labour Government is not a "Lesser Evil" than a National Government, or a Tory Government, or a coalition between Labour and capitalist parties.

We are not here concerned with the accuracy of the statements then made by the Communist Party—many of them are absurdly inaccurate—but only with the fact that the Party which held these views now pretends to be enthusiastic for Labour Government, democracy, parliamentary methods, etc. They want now to save us from Fascism, and tell us to do it by supporting the Party whose policy when in office was a "Fascist policy." They want to save democracy and fight dictatorship (yet their masters created and glorified dictatorship in Russia), and their method is to have another Labour Government, although they say that the last Labour Government helped to strengthen "the dictatorship of the capitalists." They want to save democracy, although as recently as 1932 they declared it to be a sham.

In short, the Communists are what they have always been, fickle, unscrupulous, superficial in their judgment of working class questions and an unmixed danger to the interests of the working class and the Socialist movement. True they do not belong to the conception of a reconstituted Liberal Party (whether called Liberal, Labour or Popular Front) which could gain a majority on a programme of democracy and social reform. But neither do they belong to the conception of a Socialist Party, for democracy is essential to the progress of the Socialist movement. They are unwittingly an instrument of reaction, unable to assist in saving democracy in the present, and equally unable to use democracy for the promotion of the Socialist movement.

#### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that Cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

## Socialists and War

Liverpool,

C.4.

Dear Sir,

I have August SOCIALIST STANDARD containing "reply" to my sincere effort to gain real information. When addressing Socialists one doesn't feel under the necessity of explaining every word one uses. I will try again.

Would the Socialist Party of Great Britain welcome the demilitarisation—disarmament, if you like—of Great Britain, on land, sea and in the air, *now*?

If not, to what extent would your Party retain the military machine, now obtaining in Britain, and for what purpose?

Yours truly E. C.

Reply.

For one who claims to have read THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for years, and to be familiar with the Socialist position, our correspondent shows a remarkable lack of knowledge of the Socialist case and of the facts of the capitalist world. However, as he professes to be unable to understand the reply given in the August issue, we will amplify it.

Our correspondent must be quite familiar with our Declaration of Principles, and will therefore know the passage, "The machinery of Government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers. . . ." Knowing that this is a cardinal principle of Socialism, our correspondent asks us if we "would welcome" a move on the part of the capitalist class to "disarm," that is to say, to deprive themselves of the armed forces without which they could not conserve their monopoly of the wealth taken from the workers! All we can say is that we are dumb-founded that anyone should expect us to regard such a question as a serious one. For the capitalist class to disarm would mean that they had decided to abdicate, give up their position as a ruling and exploiting class, and allow the working class to walk in and take possession. Our correspondent asks if we are in favour of the capitalists doing this. Sure we are; just as we are in favour of the capitalist class handing over control of the armed forces or the State Treasury to the S.P.G.B.! As the one supposition is as fantastic as the other, we do not normally waste time considering any of them, and we never imagined until now that anyone would ask such a question.

So much for the question of "complete disarmament" raised by our correspondent (see August THE SOCIALIST STANDARD).

Our correspondent also raises the question of more armaments or fewer armaments. Here again (as was pointed out in the August THE SOCIALIST STANDARD) the S.P.G.B. does not control the question. It is controlled by the capitalist class and

will continue to be controlled by them while they remain in power. They will decide it, as they have always done, by balancing against their views as to the need for more armaments to protect British capitalism against the workers and foreign capitalists, their desire to curtail expenditure on armaments because they, the capitalists, have to foot the bill. If by international conferences the capitalists can for a time cheapen the cost of armaments by agreeing to certain limits, they will do so. The S.P.G.B. and the working class do not control the issue and will not do so until the capitalists have been removed from power. It is therefore idle to ask which of two alternative capitalist policies Socialists favour. We favour neither.

The question about what Socialists will do with the military machine after the conquest of power was dealt with in the August THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. Here is the reply once more:—

The S.P.G.B. has one object—Socialism—and to attain that object knows that the organised working class must gain control of the machinery of government, including the armed forces. When such control has been achieved the working class will know how to use the armed forces for so long as it may be necessary to defend Socialism against an insurrectionary minority or an undefeated foreign group of capitalists.

ED. COMM.

#### Educational Activities

A Party Meeting is being held on Saturday, September 5th, at Head Office, to discuss the Party's educational activities. The time of the meeting is 7 p.m.

## War and the Working-Class

Do you know why modern wars occur?

Do you know what is the Socialist attitude towards war?

Do you know why Socialists are not Pacifists?

Do you know that the S.P.G.B. was the only political organisation in Great Britain which proclaimed its Socialist opposition to the Great War immediately it broke out and kept to that attitude throughout the War?

Do you know what attitude you as a worker should take up towards war?

For answers to these and other questions read "WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS."

36 pages, 2d. Post free 2½d.



## The Menace of Aerial Warfare (Concluded.)

IN 1923 the League of Nations arranged for an authoritative investigation of the possibilities of bacteriological warfare. The result of the investigation is summed up in Victor Lefebure's "Scientific Disarmament."

Open the book at page 215 and skim the pages which follow:—

... they referred to the use of cultures of cholera and typhus, mainly by infecting water supplies. Professor Pfeiffer, although pointing out the obstacles in the way of successful use by infecting the supplies of larger towns, stated, "There are, no doubt, other possibilities. Infectious germs might, for instance, be thrown from aircraft direct into pure water reservoirs. In such a case filtration would be ineffectual." He refers to the possibility of inoculation, but goes on, "An epidemic whose very name recalls the horrors and devastations which it caused in former centuries, and which is, therefore, particularly likely to spread terror and dismay, is the human plague. The most likely way of spreading an epidemic of plague would, no doubt, be the scattering of plague-infected rats, which might very easily be achieved with the help of aircraft. In this way an epidemic of bubonic plague might almost certainly be brought about in the trenches, which in any case are alive with rats; in the interior of the enemy country, also, the dissemination of plague germs on a large scale would be possible, resulting undoubtedly in the formation of centres of infection. . . ." Professor Pfeiffer also deals with artificial infection of projectiles with . . . anthrax, glanders and perhaps rabies. . . . Professor Cannon comments on crop attack. . . . Professor Madsden gives a balanced view of the possibilities as to the present and the future. . . . The means which bacteriology possesses in its present state of development would certainly suffice to give rise to epidemics of greater or lesser extent; airmen or persons with a knowledge of the topography of localities might infect the central sources of the water or milk supply of a big city, and thereby propagate epidemics of typhoid fever, cholera or other intestinal diseases. Epidemics of this nature might even be fairly serious.

Major Lefebure continues to point out that, although Professor Madsden and some others believe that epidemics could be got under control without much damage being done, they obviously are not taking into full account the special circumstances of war and the fact that diseases would be propagated on a far larger scale than is usual under peace conditions.

He says, quite rightly:—

Now if an attack of this nature were to be made producing hundreds of thousands of casualties requiring (special) treatment quickly, it would take us far and away outside our normal medical facilities both as to appliances and personnel. (The word (special) here replaces a phrase of the same meaning to reduce the necessary quotation to a minimum. L.G.S.).

In addition, resistance to a particular disease is not nearly so high if the population is not exposed to the bacteria of the disease in normal life. It would, therefore, be very unsafe to prophesy the possible rate at which an epidemic of (say) bubonic plague would spread, since Europeans have not been exposed to this bacteria for several hundred years.

The position at the present time cannot be

calculated, but I think it cannot be denied that bacteriological warfare is an additional menace to the security of civilian populations as well as to combatants. Its possibilities we shall learn if we experiment, although the value of such an experiment is yet to be established, but it is certain that expert opinion is firmly convinced that, be the damage great or small, bacteria are definitely an addition to the armoury of destructive weapons.

The quotations I have used were taken from a report made in 1923—it is now 1936.

### Protection

There is, and can be, no possible protection whatever for civilian populations against chemical warfare from the air—(Major-Gen. Jackson, ex-Assistant Director, War Office).

There is no protection for the civilian against aerial attack.

Nowhere must this be better realised than in Government circles which have access to knowledge denied to the general public, and the services of experts in all departments of warfare and technology.

They suggest, as a precaution, that the people be instructed in methods of protection, when they know quite well that there are none.

The very best that can be done is to arrange and organise essential services, such as power-stations, fire brigades and doctors, so that they can function and perhaps relieve some part of the suffering with a minimum of interference. That this much is possible, if only gas be considered, is admitted, but high-explosive, thermit and the inevitable stampede of the people, we have not even begun to take into account.

The Government plans decontaminating centres, i.e., receiving stations where the injured can be medically treated and have their dangerous clothing destroyed or made safe for use. It plans to make respirators available for the essential services, and, possibly, a modified form of mask for the civilian population which would afford partial or temporary protection for the lungs, the assumption being, presumably, that this latter type would be used as a subsidiary protection.

The cost of an efficient respirator at the moment is about £4, but mass production would probably result in a considerable drop in price—to (say) 30s. if the manufacture was unsubsidised. Taking war-time production as a basis for calculation, about six months would be required to manufacture 10,000,000 masks. This does not take into account the special needs of young children or aged persons, for whom respiratory protection is a very difficult matter. It has been suggested that very small children might be placed in a sack of some gas-proof material, the air to be supplied by a pump through a filter, but the efficacy of the idea

is doubtful, and no useful suggestions have yet been made to overcome the fact that a gassed or injured parent would be unable to continue pumping. Presumably, too, it would be necessary to anaesthetise the child before inserting it into the sack. Otherwise it would probably act in the same way as a cat in a bag—struggle furiously to get out.

To the suggestion of gas-shelters I oppose the following facts and figures. If bomb- and gas-proof shelters could be constructed to house (say) 500 people, and such large shelters present a considerable engineering problem, about 10,000 would be required as a minimum to house the population of London in immediate danger.

These shelters, which at present exist on paper and in the minds of optimistic speculators, would take months, if not years, to build. They would need a reinforced concrete roof 13 feet thick, or to be sunk to a depth of 80 feet underground to provide reasonable safety from high-explosive. The walls, if the shelter was built above ground, would need to be strong enough to carry the roof and to withstand the shock of high-explosive on the roof or the side-thrust on the walls if it dropped in the immediate vicinity. Such shelters would have to be constructed to admit no air whatsoever except through special filters. Apart from the fact that no device is known that will go on filtering indefinitely, and, therefore, if intensive attacks were carried out over a period of several days the filters would probably release the gas in ever-growing quantities into the chamber, the smallest crack in the structure would admit air directly from outside and make the filters useless.

Chimneys could be used to draw pure air from above the gas-cloud, but to be reasonably safe they would have to be constructed to a height of at least 150 feet—an excellent target for high-explosive. The following facts should demolish any arguments in favour of chimneys:—

A 500/1,000 kg. explosive bomb can demolish a whole block of houses, even if it only explodes in the vicinity.

A 100/200 kg. explosive bomb can destroy a house of several stories.

A 50 kg. explosive bomb can cause serious damage.

(General Von Haeften.)

The chimney that could withstand the explosive force of a 100-200 kg. bomb planted reasonably near the base cannot be built.

Water would be a serious problem since mustard gas, in particular, sinks to the bottom of reservoirs and renders water drawn from such a source undrinkable.

Food supplies would have to be rigorously protected from mustard and lewisite, and as attacks on docks and wharves with high-explosive, thermit and mustard gas would be an enemy's

certain course of action, it is difficult to see how it could be done.

If an air-raid on London was signalled, the city would be plunged into total darkness. At the same time the public would be told of the impending raid in some way or another, and, human nature being what it is, would attempt to evacuate the city. Almost the whole of London's private car traffic would be thrown, in pitch darkness, on to roads already incapable of providing for normal traffic. Buses would leave their routes and head for open country. People would make for the country on foot, by cycle, lorry or any kind of transport they could commandeer. The rate of evacuation would not, perhaps, be very great until the raid commenced, but when the dead and wounded and fires springing up in every direction became an actuality, then it cannot be doubted that something in the nature of a stampede would commence. Necessarily, thousands would be killed in the raid, but the problem would take on its most serious aspects when the question of food, shelter and sanitary arrangements for several million panic-stricken people became of urgent importance. It is more than possible that famine and epidemic diseases would have to be dealt with.

If it is thought that I exaggerate possibilities, here are the words of the military correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*:—

It has been suggested that in the event of severe air attacks, 40 per cent. of London's population would leave the city within the first 48 hours, and 80 per cent. within the week. Such an estimate may be exaggerated, but it is, nevertheless, essential to consider ways of controlling any such mass evacuation and of feeding and housing refugees.

Gerald Heard has expressed much the same opinion recently, and from occasional items of news it is permissible to assume that the Government are awake to this probability.

Even if efficient gas-shelters were in existence, it is more likely than not that their protective capacity would be doubted and an evacuation take place on nearly as large a scale.

The imagination refuses to function except in vague generalisation. To fill in details would be beyond its scope.

For man, woman or child there is no sure protection.

### Summary

War would inevitably lead to destructive air attacks on the cities, not only of England, but of all belligerent countries, with effects very much as I have described.

Modern warfare is, above all, a battle of productive capacity, and a necessary condition of the factory operative being able to function is that he shall be reasonably free from attack. It is therefore very much to a country's advantage to harry its enemy's centres of production and distribution.

It is more than possible that, after simultaneous raids on the capital cities of all the belligerents, the



effects would be so grave that an immediate armistice would be sought by all parties. The vulnerable spots in any country are its great centres of population and production, but without such centres it is impossible to wage war on a modern scale with modern weapons, and, in spite of opinions to the contrary, there can be little doubt that the full possibilities of unrestricted warfare in Europe are well-known to all European Governments and military experts. The present spectacle of elderly statesmen trying to adapt the diplomacy of Metternich, the Napoleonic wars and the *fin-de-siècle* to modern conditions, would be amusing if it did not carry within itself the germs of gigantic tragedy.

We may observe the fear in action in the bluff and counter-bluff that has characterised the dispute

between Italy and England. There is no doubt that Italy's action threatened British capitalists' African and Imperial interests, and, in pre-war days, strong military action would have been taken at the commencement of the dispute. Now the case is altered. By using the League of Nations to declare an economic siege against Italy, Britain hoped to protect its interests without resorting to that unknown quantity—war. Mussolini had already made tentative arrangements to evacuate Naples, but it is doubtful if his advisers would have allowed him to declare war.

It would be a very bold speculator indeed who would dare to predict the future, but the possibility of war will be more remote when its dangers are more widely realised.

L. G. SAVAGE.

## Notes of the Month

### Cruelty to Animals

THE *Daily Herald* (February 11th, 1936) reports a speech by Sir Robert McCarrison, who is an authority on nutrition, in which he described experiments he had carried out on animals with the diets of the Indian Sikhs and poorer class Indians, and with the diets of the "poorer classes" in Britain. The report is:—

He fed one group of animals with the Sikh diet and another group with that of the poorer classes in Britain—with white bread, margarine, over-sweetened tea with very little milk, boiled cabbage and boiled potatoes, tinned meat and cheaper sorts of jam.

The animals did not increase in weight; their growth was stunted; they were badly proportioned; they were nervous and unhappy and developed chest and internal troubles, which are the most common complaints affecting the poorer classes in Britain.

"Indeed," said Sir Robert, "while the group fed on Sikh diet had resistance to disease, those fed on the poorer British diet fared little or no better than those on the diet of the worst-fed Indian natives. The maladies from which they suffered were much the same."

The more investigations are made into the stunted growth, nervous diseases and malnutrition of the working class the more evidence is produced that these disorders are the result of the lack of the necessary foods vital to physical health. Few, however, seem to notice the fact that the working class buy foods lacking in food values, because wages do not permit the purchase of better foods.

There has been no indication that Sir Robert McCarrison was reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for inflicting these experiments upon the animals.

### Should Workers Fight for Capitalism

In a speech at Holbrook Park, Horsham, Mr. Winston Churchill criticised the "peace policy" of Mr. George Lansbury and Canon H. R. L. Shepherd, whom he described as "professional pacifists." "If these men had their way," he

said, "our country . . ." would in a few years be:—

Stripped of its possessions, horribly impoverished and receiving its orders from some foreign dictator.

Mr. Churchill is anxious for the security of "our country." Quite naturally; he and his class own it. And the prospect of being "stripped and horribly impoverished" by foreign capitalist powers is anything but assuring to him. After the last War the English capitalist class "stripped" the German capitalist class of colonial and other possessions and imposed upon Germany the dictatorship of the Treaty of Versailles. Mr. Churchill, typical of the English capitalist class, though perhaps more outspoken, fears that the tables might be turned upon them. What he seemingly fails to realise is that the interests of the capitalist class and working class are not identical. The working class, having no possessions except its ability to labour, can have no interest in fighting for "our country." "Horrible impoverishment" adequately describes the conditions of the working class in England and Germany before and since the last War. The War made no essential change in those conditions. The English working class did not share in the spoils of the victory of English over German capitalism. The German working class were not affected by the loss of Germany's colonies, etc. Before, during and since the War, the working class, at all times and in all countries in capitalist society, received and receive wages which provide for a meagre subsistence contrasted with the enormous wealth produced under capitalism. War cannot materially affect this essential condition of working class life under capitalism.

### Communists and the "Daily Herald"

The *Daily Herald* (July 17th) has an article criticising the Communist Party and its proposals

for a "United Front." The article asks and comments as follows:—

Where the finances of a Party with some 7,000 members come from.

Those finances run into tens of thousands of pounds a year.

An organisation of 7,000 members relying on subscriptions from those could employ only an exceedingly small staff. Its propaganda would be limited.

But the Communist Party of Great Britain, and its subsidiaries, has at command a staff which in numbers an organisation with a much greater membership might well envy.

The Communist Party, moreover, publishes a daily propaganda sheet of eight pages—with hardly any advertisements, and a circulation which must involve substantial losses year by year.

No figures of the real, all-in expenditure of the Communist Party in Great Britain are available. The Communist Party reveals neither where its money comes from nor where it goes.

The Communist Party is not responsible to its own members, but is subservient to the Communist International.

In a reply for the Communist Party, published in the *Daily Worker* (July 18th), Mr. W. G. Shepherd does not meet the point that the Communist Party is subservient to the Communist International; nor the point that no figures of Communist Party expenditure are available—"where its money comes from nor where it goes."

Instead, he says that in the six and a half years of its existence, readers have subscribed £35,000 to the *Daily Worker*; that in October, 1934, Harry Pollitt appealed for funds for new premises, and in less than six weeks £2,500 was subscribed by 1,700 people (this represents 29s. 5d. per head), the subscribers' letters being exhibited at a "big victory dance in Shoreditch"; and that, "from the beginning of November, 1935, to the end of June this year, our readers contributed the remarkable sum of £3,893."

It would be pointless to argue about the accuracy of these figures. To anyone with the least knowledge, the cost of running a daily newspaper, such as the *Daily Worker*, is obviously enormous. And that represents only a part of the publishing activities of the Communist Party. There are other activities which cost considerable sums of money. At the General Election in 1931 they spent £5,500 in unsuccessfully trying to get Communists returned to Parliament.

That the Communist Party receives financial aid from the Communist International is unquestionable, and is not denied by them. The fidelity with which it falls into line with every change of policy dictated by Moscow should dispel any doubt. There is no reason why they should not receive this aid, nor any reason for the fact to be denied. The fact has to be considered, however, in estimating the value of Communist Party policy, and how little it need rely on the working class in this country in order to carry on. The policy of changing slogans can be pursued

indefinitely when the money need for the organisation at the back comes from outside the working class movement. H.W.

### New Premises Fund

Again we have to remind readers that we need money urgently for our New Premises Fund. When the present renewal runs out, in little over half a year, we shall be faced with the need to secure other and larger headquarters. Our freedom of choice will be strictly limited by the amount of money we have in hand to enable us to meet removal and furnishing costs, and to pay the higher rent until out extended activities make it possible to pay the higher rent out of current income.

Send your donations to the Treasurer, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

### Answers to Correspondents

E. C. Cornett, *Liverpool*.—The question of rates and taxes has often been dealt with, and we do not propose to return to it again at present. See THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, June, 1936, and February, 1934.

### Educational Visits

The Educational Visits will recommence on the first Saturday in October—October 3rd.

### Bristol

A Propaganda Meeting will be held on Durdham Downs on Sunday, September 6th. Time, 2.30 p.m. All Bristol readers are urged to attend.

### "Capital"

By Karl Marx. First volume. 869 Pages. Published by Modern Library, New York (on Kerr's plates). 4s. (Post free, 4s. 8d.)

### "Capital" and other Writings

This volume (429 pages; 4s.; post free, 4s. 6d.) includes Borchardt's abridgment (300 pages) of the three volumes of Marx's "Capital," also the "Communist Manifesto," "Civil War in France," etc. Published by Modern Library, New York.

Send your order to Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

## BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m.

at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guilford Street), W.C.1

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.



## Outdoor Propaganda Meetings

SUNDAYS		6th	13th	20th	27th
Brockwell Park ...	6.0 p.m.	Turner	Willmott	Grainger	Cameron, J.
Finsbury Park ...	6.0 p.m.	Reginald	Turner	Ambridge	Bellingham
Regents Park ...	11.30 a.m.	Turner	Lestor	Cameron	Willmott
Cock Hotel, East Ham ...	8.0 p.m.	Grainger	Ambridge	Nesbit	Lestor
Clapham Common ...	3.30 p.m.	Willmott	Bellingham	Banks	Nesbit
Queens Road, Bayswater ...	8.0 p.m.	Bellingham	Banks	Hayden	Reginald
Victoria Park ...	5.30 p.m.	Ambridge	Nesbit	Willmott	Robins
Whipps Cross ...	8.0 p.m.	Nesbit	Berry, V.	Bellingham	Manion
Forest Gate, Forest Road ...	8.0 p.m.	Berry, V.	Manion	Lestor	Grainger
SATURDAYS		5th	12th	19th	26th
Rushcroft Road ...	7.30 p.m.	Kohn	Willmott	Ambridge	Lestor
Jolly Butcher's Hill ...	7.30 p.m.	Banks	—	Turner	—
Ravensdale Road ...	7.30 p.m.	—	Turner	—	Hayden
Roper Street, Eltham ...	7.30 p.m.	—	Manion	—	Willmott
Undine St., Tooting ...	8.0 p.m.	Willmott	Reginald	Manion	Banks
Southend. Meetings every Saturday at 8 o'clock.					
MONDAYS		WEDNESDAYS			
Highbury Corner ...	8 p.m.	East Avenue, High Street North,			
Ilford Station ...	8 p.m.	East Ham ... 8 p.m.			
Rushcroft Road, Brixton ...	8 p.m.	Avenue Road, Lewisham ... 8 p.m.			
Ridley Road, Dalston, E. ...	8 p.m.	Deanery Road, Stratford, E. ... 8 p.m.			

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from June 10th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding (Dues Sec.), "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., A. Miller, 14, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E.2.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., at Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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London, October, 1936

[Monthly. Twopence

.....To the  
Capitalists  
democracies  
and dictator-  
ships are only  
means to an  
end — the  
preservation of  
the property  
system.

## The Russian "Terrorist" Trial

### THE TRUTH ABOUT A GREAT FRAME-UP

**L**AST month we made some comments on the Russian trial based upon newspaper reports. We now have the official report of the trial contained in a special number of "International Press Correspondence," Vol. 16, No. 41, September 10th, 1936.

The first thing that one notices after reading the dreary document is that it is not the report of a trial at all. All the accused pleaded guilty and the court proceedings that began on August 19th were simply means for them to publicly express their guilt, call themselves scum, traitors and various other names, and also, most importantly perhaps, blacken the character of Trotsky as much as possible.

The second thing one notices is that this alleged full report is not a full report at all but simply reads as a piece of Stalinite propaganda, interspersed with some farcical statement, question and reply on the part of the public prosecutor and the accused.

The third thing that strikes one is that the proceedings actually began several

months earlier *in secret*. One of the accused, V. Olberg, was examined on February 21st. The public proceedings, according to the information contained in the report, did not commence until all the accused had been examined and re-examined and admissions of guilt extracted from them.

The report occupies 41½ large, closely-printed pages, which are apportioned as follows:—

The Indictment .....	7 pages
Proceedings before the Military Collegium (the "Trial") .....	18 "
Speech of State Prosecutor Vishinsky 12½ ..	
Final Statement of Accused .....	2 "
Verdict .....	2 "

The proceedings commenced on August 19th at mid-day with the reading of the indictment. After this each of the accused repeated the statement he had made at the secret investigation admitting his guilt, and an exchange of question and answer took place. This was followed by Vishinsky's speech and a final statement by each of the accused. At mid-day on August 24th the verdict was given.

We are asked to believe that this was a properly constituted trial, but just consider the matter. Here were sixteen men, alleged to be on trial for their lives, and the whole proceedings only lasted five days! The prosecutor, in his final speech (which occupied nearly a day), addresses the judges as follows:—

"With all thoroughness, you have subjected to investigation and judicial verification each of these proofs, every fact, every event, every step of the defendants, etc." (Page 1125.)

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All this careful verification is supposed to have been done in the three days of the trial, as the prosecutor was speaking at the beginning of the fourth, yet there are at least 28 volumes of evidence, as in one place "Vol. 28, file 112 of the Record," is quoted! They certainly are fast workers! At mid-day on the 24th the accused were sentenced. They appealed. The appeal was disallowed and they were shot on the 25th. So the Court of Appeal must have done some fast work, too, if they also went through the volumes of evidence!

### No Documents Produced at the Trial

The only evidence produced at the trial was the statements of the accused and the statements of two witnesses brought forward by the prosecution. One of these was Smirnov's wife and the other was also a "suspect"! No documents were produced as evidence (apart from statements alleged to have been made by the accused in preliminary investigations). A letter is referred to as having been received from Trotsky and destroyed. An open letter that was not read. No information is given of how the authorities got wind of the "plot" and how they were able, for instance, to extract from V. Olberg on February 21st practically all the alleged details of the "plot." We use the words "alleged" here for reasons that will appear later.

The lack of information on how the authorities knew of the "plot" is striking, because a good deal of it consisted of private conversations in cars, private apartments, etc. The value of the evidence of the accused may be gauged from the opening of the final statement of Yevdokimov:—

How can anyone believe even a single word of ours? begins the defendant Yevdokimov. Who will believe us, who played a base comedy at the fresh grave of Kirov whom we had killed, us who only accidentally and through no fault of ours failed to become the murderers of Stalin, and of other leaders of the people! Who would believe us who are facing the court as a counter-revolutionary bandit gang, as allies of fascism, of the Gestapo? (page 1137).

In his final speech, the prosecutor, Vishinsky, also says of them:—

But where is there proof of this, how can we believe them when they have surpassed all conceptions of treachery, of perfidy, deceit, betrayal, treason?

And yet it is the words of this "perfidious" gang that is the only evidence of the plot and of their guilt—no other evidence was brought forward.

Let us consider another point. As there was no evidence but their own, how were they induced to give it? Remorse or repentance won't fit, because if they are the type the prosecution makes out, they could not have suffered from either, and certainly they would not have deliberately asked to be shot! Of Zinoviev it is said:—

In spite of obstinate denial, the accused Zinoviev was compelled by the weight of evidence which was brought against him by the investigating

authorities to admit that "The main object which the Trotskyite-Zinovievite centre pursued was to kill the leaders of the C.P.S.U., and in the first place to kill Stalin and Kirov" (page 1100).

What was the "weight of evidence" that could compel a man of Zinoviev's intelligence to admit the direction of a murder plot? The only evidence given in the report is the unsupported statements of people who "have surpassed all conceptions of treachery, of perfidy, deceit, betrayal, treason"! And all these statements were extracted at secret investigations conducted by the secret police!

One of the principal witnesses, the accused Bakayev, is alleged to have given details of a plot that implicated everybody, and made himself out to be an assassin. No information is given of how he came to do that, and yet Vishinsky describes him as follows:—

Precisely, Bakayev, who is known as a man full of bitter hate, a resolute man, a man stubborn and persevering, with very great will-power, of strong character and endurance, a man who was capable of stopping at nothing to achieve these aims which he set himself! (page 1136).

What dark and terrible means were employed to get such a man to make an abject confession and to end his final statement by declaring that he "realises the entire gravity of his crime and expects a just and deserved sentence from the proletarian court?" (Page 1138.) Perhaps some day we shall know.

### "Confessions" that are Incredible

Let us take a look at the statement of one of the accused, remembering that he is also supposed to fit the prosecutor's edifying description. While doing so the reader should try and imagine what means must have been employed to extract such abject and self-destroying admissions. Limits of space compel us to make our quotations as few and short as possible.

During the cross-examination of Kamenev the Court dealt in detail with the policy of double-dealing employed by the plotters in addition to terror in their struggle against the Party.

Vishinsky: How is one to judge the articles and declarations which you wrote in 1933, and in which you expressed devotion to the Party? As deceit?

Kamenev: No, worse than deceit.

Vishinsky: Breach of faith?

Kamenev: Worse.

Vishinsky: Worse than deceit, worse than breach of faith. Do you find this word? Is it treachery?

Kamenev: You have said it.

Vishinsky: Zinoviev, do you confirm this?

Zinoviev: Yes.

Speaking of the motives of his conduct Kamenev stated: "I can only admit one thing, that having set myself the monstrous and criminal aim of disorganising the government of the Socialist country, we used such methods of struggle as we considered corresponded with this aim and which were just as vile and contemptible as the aim we set ourselves."

Vishinsky: Was your struggle against the leadership of the Party and of the government inspired by low personal motives, by personal thirst for power?

Kamenev: Yes, by thirst for power by our group.

Vishinsky: Do you not realise that this has nothing in common with social ideals?

Kamenev: It has just as much in common as revolution and counter-revolution have in common.

Vishinsky: Do you clearly realise that you are conducting the fight against Socialism?

Kamenev: We clearly realise that we were struggling against the leadership of the Party and of the government which is leading the country to Socialism.

Vishinsky: Thus you are also against Socialism?

Kamenev: You draw the conclusion of the historian and prosecutor (page 1113).

Now, Reader, can it be possible that you are gullible enough to swallow the above as an example of a genuine confession? The thing is too utterly childish to pass.

According to the statements in the report, the accused are cross-examined. Here is another sample of the cross-examination, which surely speaks for itself:—

Bakayev tries to make his responsibility appear less in his statement. He says that out of the whole terroristic activities of the Centre he only knew of the decision to murder Stalin and Kirov, and that the first he had heard of the other acts of terrorism, which were in course of being prepared, was from the indictment.

Vishinsky: Bakayev, you were a member of the Terrorist Centre? Is that correct?

Bakayev: That is so.

Vishinsky: In the year, 1932, you were commissioned to organise the murder of Comrade Stalin. Is that so?

Bakayev: Yes.

Vishinsky: You adopted a number of practical measures in order to carry out this commission, that is to say, to organise several attempts, to organise an attack on Comrade Stalin, which miscarried through no fault of yours?

Bakayev: That is correct.

Vishinsky: In addition you took part in the murder of Comrade Kirov?

Bakayev: Yes.

Vishinsky: Moreover you went to Leningrad on behalf of the Terrorist Centre to check up on the preparations for this murder?

Bakayev: Yes.

Vishinsky: On returning from Leningrad you reported that everything was in order, that the preparations for the murder were going forward successfully. During your visit you met Kotolnikov, Rumiantzev and others?

Bakayev: Yes.

Vishinsky: In addition you met Nikolaiev, gave him directions for the murder, and satisfied yourself that Nikolaiev was a determined person and would be in a position to carry out the task which had been set him?

Bakayev: Yes.

During the further course of the examination, however, Bakayev tried to make his part appear smaller by stating that he was only a "co-organiser" in the preparations for the dastardly murder of Comrade Kirov.

Vishinsky: You give signals, you check up on the times, you check up on everything that has anything to do with your signal, you carry through an act; does not all that mean being the organiser of the crime?

Bakayev: Yes, that means being the organiser of the crime.

Vishinsky: Therefore, we are right in saying that you were the organiser of the murder of Comrade Kirov?

Bakayev: Well, yes, only I was not alone.

Vishinsky: You were not alone, Yevdokimov was with you. Defendant Zinoviev, you also were

an organiser of the murder of Comrade Kirov?

Zinoviev: In my opinion Bakayev is right if he means that those principally responsible for the dastardly murder of Kirov were myself—Zinoviev—Trotsky and Kamenev, who organised the united Terrorist Centre. In this Bakayev played a big part, but by no means a preponderating one.

Vishinsky: The decisive roles were played by yourself, Trotsky and Kamenev. Defendant Kamenev, do you agree with Zinoviev's statement that you, Trotsky and Zinoviev, were the principal organisers, and that Bakayev played the part of practical organiser?

Kamenev: Yes.  
(page 111-112).

### 'Shoot the Reptiles'

This may be a fitting point to notice that the report is itself also a piece of propaganda on behalf of the Politburo—the leading members of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. They are frequently eulogised in it, and whatever there may have been in the statements or attitude of the accused that would tell in their favour at all, no mention of it is made in the report. Smirnov is a case in point. According to foreign journalists who were in Moscow at the time, his attitude at the trial was by no means as abject as the report conveys. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent states that Smirnov refused to recant. (*Manchester Guardian*, August 24th, 1936.)

The Moscow correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* (August 21st, 1936) also gives a favourable idea of Smirnov's attitude. This correspondent makes some further remarks that are worth quoting in full, as they throw an interesting light on the proceedings. In order to understand the opening remarks, we should mention that Sokolnikov, Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin and Karl Radek had already been accused by the prisoners of complicity in the murder plot.

Strangely enough, to-day's newspapers suppress all reference to the charges made against these men, and Government officials state that, except for Sokolnikov, they are not yet under arrest. This adds to the general strangeness of the proceedings.

To-day's papers publish articles and resolutions headed "Shoot the Reptiles," but nowhere do they mention where the trial is being held. Precautions have been taken to prevent the general public noticing arrivals and departures at the court house.

The 300 people admitted to the court are for the most part newspaper representatives, officials and Secret Police, some in splendid uniforms and others in plain clothes. Some members of the Communist Youth Movement are also allowed to be present. Entirely contrary to all precedent, no photographs have been taken.

This correspondent describes the arrival of Sofonova, who was brought from prison, where she awaits trial for conspiracy to murder Voroshilov.

Sofonova, a grey-faced and hollow-cheeked woman of about 35, was dressed in a new but drab beige frock with red facings. At the microphone, through which all the prisoners give evidence, she slowly repeated in a dull voice the charges she had made against Smirnov when under interrogation by the Secret Police.

The prisoners' evidence was considered sufficient to convict each other, and yet, although it



was equally clear in the case of Bukharin and Rykov, we learn since that they have not even been brought to trial. Another instance of the fake nature of the business. Note in the above that the general public were not admitted to the trial, but some Communist youths were. Was this to give the latter a lesson or because they were too inexperienced to see through the business? Also a *microphone* was used. People could not see, but they were allowed to hear!

The description of Sofonova giving evidence in a dull voice suggests the effects of the secret investigation and what means may have been used to terrify and cow the accused. The *Evening Standard* writes:—

Most of the prisoners were near to collapse when the judge yesterday pronounced sentence. (25/8/1936.)

### Propaganda for Stalin

Another instance of the extent to which intimidation must have been carried is the obvious putting in the mouth of Kamenev the following self-condemnation and eulogy of the murderous clique at the head of Russia to-day:—

The morning session of August 20th begins with an examination of the defendant L. B. Kamenev.

"The terrorist conspiracy was organised and led by myself, Zinoviev and Trotsky," testified Kamenev. "I came to the view that the policy of the Party, the policy of its leadership had won in the only sense in which a political victory is possible in the land of socialism, that this policy had been accepted by the toiling masses. Our attempt to speculate on the possibility of a split in the Party leadership also failed. We had reckoned on the Right group of Rykov, Bukharin, Tomskey. The elimination of this group from the leadership and the fact that it was discredited in the eyes of the toilers knocked this trump out of our hands too. We could not hope for any serious internal difficulties to overthrow the leadership which had carried the country through the most difficult stages, through industrialisation and collectivisation. There remained two roads: either honestly and completely to put an end to the struggle against the Party or to continue it, without any hope, however, for mass support, without a political platform, without a banner, i.e., by means of individual terror. We chose the second road. We were guided in doing this by boundless bitterness against the leadership of the Party and country and by a thirst for power to which we had once been near and from which we had been removed by the progress of historical development."

Relating to Vishinsky's questions the defendant Kamenev related to the court how the Zinovievites had established a bloc with the Trotskyites with a view to organising a terrorist struggle against the Party and Soviet state.

"We conducted negotiations for a bloc with Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Ter-Vaganyan not as with authors of independent political directives. They were of value to us as persons who were following with precision the directives of Trotsky. Knowing Smirnov and Mrachkovsky as active Trotskyites, knowing of Smirnov's trip abroad and of the fact that he had established contact there with Trotsky, we were absolutely convinced that the directive regarding the terrorist policy conveyed by Smirnov and Mrachkovsky and defended by them was a precise directive from Trotsky. On the basis of this and owing to the fact that Trotsky's directives for terrorism coincided with our own sentiments, we concluded what is referred to here as a 'bloc,' and what should be called a close terrorist conspiracy. This conspiracy was built up in

1932 as an organised league which had no other platform and which took as its aim the capture of power by terrorist disorganisation of the government, by the elimination and murder of Stalin as the leader of the Party and country and of his closest associates." (Page 1112.)

The above is a fairly clear illustration of the propagandist side of the trial.

### What Were the Secret Police Doing?

Let us now turn to some other points.

In December, 1934, and January, 1935, there were two trials in relation to the killing of Kirov. Kamenev, Zinoviev, Yevdokimov and Bakayev were charged in connection with this business and imprisoned, as were also several others. If there was a group of murder plotters then the Government was obviously alive to it and the secret police were on the job. In spite of this we are asked to believe that, as late as May, 1936, the plot was still being carried on, partly directed from prison, and that Fritz-David, Olberg, Berman-Yurin and company were still going ahead with the assassination project. Here is the statement from Berman-Yurin:—

Berman-Yurin: In September, 1935, the congress was to have been convened. I gave Fritz David the Browning with the bullets, so that he would hide it in his apartment. But before the opening of the congress Fritz David informed me that he again was unable to obtain a ticket, but that he himself would be at the congress. We agreed that he then would commit the terrorist act.

Several days later Fritz David and I met, and he said that he had been unable to shoot. He, Fritz David, had sat in a box; there were many people in a box and there was no possibility of shooting. Thus this plan of ours also failed.

In December Fritz David informed me that recently a messenger from Sedov and Trotsky had arrived, and asked for information why the terrorist action had not yet been carried out. Fritz David gave him exact information, and received instructions to seize some other opportunity, some interview for reception, to which I or Fritz David must without fail secure entry and there kill Stalin. In May, 1936, Fritz David informed Berman-Yurin that he had again had a messenger from Trotsky, a German, "who spoke extremely sharply with him, accused him of inactivity, of irresolution, of lack of courage, and literally demanded that he make use of any event to kill Stalin. It is necessary to hurry, no time must be lost," he said.

"At the end of May, 1936, I was arrested, and my terrorist activity was cut short." (Page 1119.)

As one writer has pointed out, the suggestion in the second paragraph above is that delegates at conferences are not allowed to move about freely.

While they were all under suspicion, and knew it, they are supposed to have been travelling freely back and forth reporting and plotting—and they all knew the ramifications and the power of the secret police!

### No Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen

All through the business, efforts were made to link up Trotsky as the real director of the conspiracy. Here is Holzman's statement:—

After his arrival in Berlin, Holzman told the court, he rang up Sedov, and arranged to meet him at the Zoological Gardens. As Holzman and Sedov did not know one another, it was arranged that each

should be carrying copies of the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Vorwärts*. After the two men met, Sedov proposed to Holzman they take a taxi.

We drove in a taxi—Holzman continued his deposition—but I do not remember the street. Sedov took me into a flat; there was nobody in the flat. It was on the fourth floor. Here I gave him the report and code. . . . I met him like this six to eight times in the course of four months. "In November," Holzman continued, "I again 'phoned Sedov, and we met again. Sedov said to me: 'As you are getting ready to go to the U.S.S.R., I would advise you to go with me to Copenhagen, where my father is.'"

Vishinsky: That is?

Holzman: That is, Trotsky.

Vishinsky: You went?

Holzman: I agreed, and told Sedov that in two or three days I would go to him in Copenhagen and stay at the Hotel Bristol, where we could meet. I went straight from the station to the hotel, and met Sedov in the lounge. (Page 1120.)

Let us consider this statement.

The second paragraph states that Holzman went to a flat with Sedov, but Holzman could not remember the street, although he visited the flat "six to eight times in the course of four months." How very curious!

The second line in the last paragraph is a misprint. Judging by the report printed in Moscow it should run: "cealment we could not go together. I arranged with". This paragraph states that they met in 1932 at the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen. Unfortunately for this statement the diplomatic correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (September 17th, 1936) points out that the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen was pulled down in 1917! Possibly one of those who took part in preparing the case had been in Copenhagen during the War but did not know the dirty trick someone had played in 1917!

The above is an excellent specimen of the flimsiness of the evidence at the trial. The case is full of discrepancies and matters that are too much strain on the credulity of intelligent people.

It is worth remembering that, in spite of the efforts of the Nazis in the German Reichstag Fire Trial in 1933, Georg Dimitrov was able to defend himself and eventually to get off scot-free, and this was under what Communists are pleased to call "Bourgeois Justice." Dimitrov did not appear before a packed court, and he was not subjected to the Russian methods of extracting "confessions." The tone and nature of these confessions stamps them as the product of the Stalinite group and not of the accused.

This case should help to impress upon the workers' minds the road Dictatorships, with their secret police, are bound to travel. Once free discussion is killed, Dictators have only one means of keeping in touch with mass opinion—secret police. The power wielded by those who control the latter enable them to perpetrate in safety what dark deeds they wish. Behind the scenes the Dictators struggle for control and it is woe for the loser. Ten years ago, Kamenev and Zinoviev united with Stalin to

push out Trotsky. To-day Nemesis has overtaken them.

The lengths to which the prosecution are prepared to go, in the effort to link up Trotsky with the German Secret Police, are shown in the case of Valentin Olberg, who is accused of obtaining a passport through the German Secret Police. The following dialogue also further illustrates how well the Russian Government have schooled their victims in self-villification.

Vishinsky: Who is Tukhalevsky?

Olberg: Tukhalevsky is director of the Slavonic Library of the Foreign Ministry in Prague. I learned from my brother that he was an agent of the German Secret Police. Tukhalevsky was informed of my visit and told me that he would endeavour to obtain for me the necessary documents. Thereupon I wrote to Sedov in Paris, informing him of the proposal the German Secret Police agent had made and asking whether Trotsky approved an agreement with such an agent. After some time I received a reply sanctioning my action, that is to say, my agreement with Tukhalevsky. Sedov wrote that the utmost secrecy was necessary, and that none of the other members of the Trotskyite organisation should be informed of this arrangement.

Olberg received the passport through Tukhalevsky and a certain Bend, from Lukas Parades, the General Consul of Honduras in Berlin, who was staying in Prague at that time.

Olberg: He sold me a passport for 13,000 Czech crowns. I received this money from Sedov.

Vishinsky: Had you any relations with the Republic of Honduras?

Olberg: No, never.

Vishinsky: Let me show this to you: Is this the passport? (The court commandant produces the passport.) (Page 1117.)

Commenting on this the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (August 29th) gives the following details of Olberg's life:—

Olberg's father was a Socialist who left the Soviet Union to settle in Germany. He took out German naturalisation papers, but in 1933 he had to leave Germany with his family, and was deprived of his German citizenship.

Valentin Olberg settled in Prague with his wife, living in great poverty. He belonged to no political party, but was greatly attracted by the land of his childhood, Russia. He tried to get an academic post in Russia, and applied for a visa at the Russian consulate in Prague in 1934, but was told that he could not have a visa unless he had a passport. It is possible to acquire the passports of certain States by purchase, and this has been done by emigrés who have been deprived of their own. Olberg succeeded in buying a Honduran passport for 7,000 Czech crowns (not 13,000 as 'admitted' in the trial). To raise this sum he sold a part of his library. His wife's parents also contributed a sum which they raised by the sale of old jewellery. That he obtained the passport from the Gestapo is, therefore, untrue.

The correspondent, quite rightly, says that inaccurate "admissions" like this throw doubt on all the admissions made by the prisoners.

### Who Are the Next "Traitors"?

Vishinsky's final speech is packed with fulsome flattery of Stalin and his associates—perhaps he also is thinking of his head! The following is a fair sample of it:—

The whole country responded to the treacherous shot of December 1st, 1934, with a unanimous curse



to the murderers. The whole country—millions and tens of millions of people were stirred and again demonstrated their solidarity and unity, their devotion to the great banner of the Party of Lenin-Stalin. Like an indestructible iron wall the whole land of the Soviets stood up in the defence of its chiefs and leaders, for each of whose hairs the criminal madmen will answer to us with their heads. In this boundless love of the millions of toilers for our Party, for its Central Committee, for our Stalin and his glorious companions, in this immeasurable love of the people lies the entire power of the defence and protection of our chiefs, the leaders of the country and the Party against traitors, murderers and bandits! (Page 1125.)

If these words mean anything, is it not strange that the opposition should be pursued with such ferocity and disposed of with such haste? In such circumstances how was it possible to work up a dangerous conspiracy? And further, why the desperate anxiety to get hold of Trotsky to wipe him out also?

In conclusion, let us note the names of the

present leaders of Russia. The prosecutor gives them in the second paragraph of his final speech:—

Terrible and monstrous is the chain of these crimes directed against our Socialist fatherland, crimes each of which deserves the severest condemnation and the severest penalty. Terrible and monstrous is the guilt of these criminals and murderers who raised their hand against the leaders of our Party, against Comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kagonovich, Orjonikidze, Kosic and Postyshev, against our leaders, the leaders of the Soviet state. Monstrous are the crimes of this band of people who not only prepared terrorist acts but killed one of the best sons of the working class, one among those most devoted to the cause of Socialism, one of the most beloved pupils of the great Stalin, the fiery tribune of the Proletarian Revolution, the unforgettable Sergei Mironovich Kirov. (Page 1125.) (Italics ours.)

We now await news of the struggle between these six for power. We are not at present able to prophesy which of them will be named as traitors!

GILMAC.

## "Food, Health and Income"

By SIR J. B. ORR

THE great and widening gap between capitalist luxury and working-class poverty is one of the significant facts of capitalism. From time to time more or less official bodies for various reasons manifest concern in the indifferent health of the working-class. One of the latest investigations is embodied in *Food, Health and Income*, the joint work of Sir J. B. Orr, a leading expert on nutrition, the Rowett Institute and the Market Supply Committee. It is a clear and scientific analysis of much available information. Written without working-class bias, it is an apt commentary on the state of the working class under capitalism to-day; all the more useful in that the standard of nourishment used is one high enough to maintain "a state of well-being such that no improvement could be effected by a change in the diet." All previous examinations have used a minimum standard—the smallest allowance on which life can be supported. The attempt has often been made by writers using the latter to show that workers' diet is, in general, satisfactory. One such account stated that only 0.02 per cent. of the persons in a depressed South Wales mining area were suffering from malnutrition (*British Medical Journal*, January 4th, 1936). A minimum standard is also the basis of unemployment scales. A committee, under the chairmanship of Miss E. Rathbone, M.P., showed in December, 1935, that these scales were too low even for a "down to the bone" expenditure.

The present enquiry divides the population into six income groups. The income per head is the family income divided by the number of persons supported.

Group	Income per head per week.	Estimated average expenditure on food.	Estimated population of group	
			Numbers.	Percentage.
I	Up to 10/-	4/-	4½ millions	10
II	10/- .. 15/-	6/-	9 "	20
III	15/- .. 20/-	8/-	9 "	20
IV	20/- .. 30/-	10/-	9 "	20
V	30/- .. 45/-	12/-	9 "	20
VI	Over 45/-	14/-	4½ "	10
Average	30/-	9/-	—	—

It is worthy of notice that while in Group VI not quite one-third or less is spent on food, in Group I upwards of two-fifths of the income is so spent; and yet this high proportion still leaves that section of the population underfed in every particular.

The sum spent on meat, milk, fish, fruit, and vegetables increases steadily with income. Butter, however, is a luxury often beyond the means of those in Group I, but replaces lard, margarine and dripping in Group VI. Cheese also is replaced by more expensive foods in this group. Where dear, but nourishing, foods are unavailable, cheap foods, often devoid of certain essential factors, such as potatoes and bread, have to do duty.

Sir J. B. Orr says: "It looks as if either the purchasing power of this group is so low that the consumption of even the cheapest foodstuffs is limited, or, what is more probable, the appetite in the lowest income group is below the average. One of the first signs of sub-optimal nutrition is diminished appetite." (p.29)—that is, that a poor diet is rapidly reflected in loss of appetite.

## Meetings, Lectures, etc.

### ISLINGTON BRANCH

Indoor Lectures. Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m. Room 1, Co-op. Hall; 129 Seven Sisters Road, Islington, N.

Oct. 7 "Marx, Lenin and Trotsky." - S. CASH  
14 "The United Front in Action." - J. CLIFFORD  
21 "What's Behind the Spanish Struggle?" - E. WILLMOTT  
28 "Can We Stop War To-day?" - E. LAKE  
Questions and discussions. Admission free. All invited

### NOTTINGHAM

Under the auspices of the Cosmo Debating Society. The University Lecture Hall, Shakespeare Street. Sunday, Nov. 15th at 2.30 p.m.

A LECTURE.—"Marxism and Terrorism."  
Speaker: R. ROBERTUS.

Admission free. Questions and discussion

### BATTERSEA

A Lecture will be given on Thursday, October 15th, at 8.30 p.m. at Latchmere Baths (Burns Rd. entrance)

"The International Situation."  
C. LESTER.

All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion

### LEWISHAM

HISTORY AND ECONOMICS CLASSES

will be held on alternate Thursdays at "Anchor," Club Room, Lewisham Road, at 8.45 p.m.

Oct. 15 "History" - REGINALD  
" 22 "Economics" - WILMOTT  
" 29 "History" - REGINALD

### HACKNEY

Indoor lectures Fridays at 8.30 p.m. at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, Hackney, E.9.

Oct. 16 "The Spanish Struggle" - WILLMOTT  
" 23 "The United Front and Revolution" - CASH  
" 30 "The Class War To-day" - NESBIT  
Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

### EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturday in each month.

Oct. 3rd. 3 p.m. London Museum  
"CLUES" - REGINALD

Oct. 17th. 3 p.m. Greenwich Naval Museum  
(King William Street, S.E.10.) - LESTER

Nov. 7th. 3 p.m. Imperial War Museum  
(St. George Rd., near Lambeth North Stn.) - LESTER  
"ARMAMENTS & INDUSTRY"

### Answers to Correspondents.

Owing to pressure on space several answers to correspondents have been held over. They will appear in a later issue. ED. COMM.

### Economics

In response to demand voiced at the recent meeting called to discuss educational activities, an Economics class will be held at Head Office every Sunday at 3 p.m. The first class will be held on Sunday, October 4th. Admission is free.

In the upper groups, not only is the quantity of food consumed greater, but the quality is higher. In determining the requirements for health of the essential nutrients, the standards compiled by Stiebeling, of the Government Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.A., were used. These detail the amount of protein, calcium, phosphorus, iron, vitamins, and calories required. The reasoned conclusion of Sir J. B. Orr is that "the average diet of Group I is inadequate for perfect health in all the constituents considered; Group II is adequate only in total proteins and total fat; Group III is adequate in energy value, protein and fat, but below standard in minerals and vitamins; Group IV is adequate in iron, phosphorus and vitamins, but probably below standard in calcium; Group V has an ample margin of safety in everything, with the possible exception of calcium; and in Group VI the standard requirements are exceeded in every case."

It is obvious that much disease must be the direct outcome of an indifferent diet. There is evidence that rickets, bad teeth, and certain anæmias are much commoner in the lower income groups. Moreover, the liability to a great variety of diseases is higher when nourishment is low. It is instanced that "children with rickets show a higher incidence of complications, and a higher death rate from some common diseases, such as whooping-cough, measles and diphtheria, than do those in the same environment without rickets" (page 43).

In a group of measurements quoted, public schoolboys of 17 are an average of 3.8 inches taller than "employed males," and at 13 Christ's Hospital boys are an average of 2.4 inches higher than council schoolboys. While height is partly determined by hereditary factors, in a number of experiments the height of children has been increased by giving additional milk. In one instance, the rate of growth in children so fed was about 20 per cent. greater than in those not having extra milk.

Well may the author hold in his conclusion that "these findings . . . raise important economic and political problems." But they are not problems to be solved by "economic statesmanship." They are the problems of capitalism, which is concerned with production for profit and offers the workers no more than is necessary to maintain in efficiency the capitalist system. By uniting to abolish this system, the workers themselves can take charge of the forces of production, so that food and all necessities of life fall into the hands of those who need them, not for profit, but for use. C. J. KILNER.

### Ramble

A ramble to Flaunden, Herts., will take place on Sunday, October 11th. Meet at Baker Street Metropolitan Station at 10 a.m. Fare 2s. 6d.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OCTOBER,



1936

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. . 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. . 1s. 3d.

The *SOCIALIST STANDARD* may also be obtained promptly through any of W. H. Smiths & Son's bookstalls.

## Socialism's Message for To-day

AS the condition of the world becomes more and more critical and chaotic, men's minds turn with greater insistence towards remedies not tried before. Yet Socialism—not, of course, the spurious article which goes by that name in Labour circles—is rarely considered at the outset because of the twin fear that it is allied to violence and disorder and that it is not practical.

The fear of violence should not require more than a brief examination. Capitalism itself, whether in war or peace, is so full of violence that no alternative could very well be worse. What serves to hide this is that the propertied class always contrive to represent their violence as "lawful," even when, as in Spain, it means organising a destructive armed rebellion, or when, as in Jaffa earlier this year, it meant the dynamiting by British authorities of the houses of 6,000 poor Arabs at only a few hours' notice, leaving them to find shelter where they could, deprived of most of their furniture.

The best answer to the person who associates Socialism with violence and disorder is to instance the S.P.G.B. In 32 years of our existence we have never on any occasion advocated violence, or any form of dictatorship or anti-democratic method. We have never broken up opponents' meetings, and we allow them the use of our platform to attack our case and state their own. Never have we preached or tried to justify any form of the suppression of the views and opinions of others. Our own past and the principles we preach and practise are the best of all guarantees that Socialists stand for orderly methods of social progress.

Socialists can also easily meet the charge that

their principles are not practical. We, indeed, make that charge against all who stand for capitalism. Is it reasonable that millions of human beings should be in want or distress in face of society's present powers of producing goods for their use? Is it practical to try to hold down these discontented millions by armed force or the methods of dictatorship? Is it practical to cherish the illusion of the Fascists that you can eliminate the conflict between the haves and have-nots by dressing them in shirts of the same colour, while leaving the economic gulf untouched? Is it practical to say, as do the Conservative, Liberal and many Labour politicians, that our only hope of peace is to amass still further gigantic forces of destruction, the vicious doctrine that force must be met with force? Is it practical to spend further years raising Labour Governments to power in the vain hope that they will be luckier at trying to administer capitalism than they were before? Is it practical any longer to believe in the capitalist system at all?

Socialists, with their feet firmly planted on the ground, urge you to give unprejudiced attention to what we say, even if at first glance it appears to be made up of what you have been told are lofty ideal aims impossible to put into practice. In a world where goods can be produced in almost unlimited amount, is it really so impracticable to set about organising distribution on the basis that all people shall have free access to the goods? What is there to prevent such organisation—except that the necessary knowledge and will are at present lacking? Are you so contemptuous of the capacity for social conduct of your fellows (and of yourself) that you believe it impossible to get the population to work without the threat of starvation under the compulsion of capitalist tyranny? Moreover, what practical alternative is there to the reorganisation of society on the lines we advocate? The actual alternative held out by the so-called "practical" reformers in the Labour Party and other non-Socialist Parties is nothing else than a preparation for a new world war between the capitalist democracies and the dictatorships. Unless the workers of the world adopt the principles of Socialism showing the way of escape from capitalism to emancipation they will be drawn into a blind, fratricidal struggle about the minor differences between one kind of capitalism and another.

Socialism offers possibilities of life for the whole population such as the world has never known before. The road to Socialism is the road of persuasion, and of democratic organisation in a Socialist political party internationally organised. Socialists know the goal and know that orderly democratic methods are the way to achieve it. Socialists alone are the practical men and women who have the key to the future in their hands, a key that can be used whenever the majority come over to our side.

## The Trades Union Congress

THE sixty-eighth annual Trades Union Congress was held at Plymouth in September, under the presidency of Mr. A. A. H. Findlay, General Secretary of the United Pattern-Makers' Union.

It is an indication of the trend of trade unionism in this country that, in recent years, the time of Congress has been taken up, to an increasingly larger extent, in debate and discussion on political affairs and international questions. This year's conference was similarly occupied. The dominant issues were Spain, national defence, dictatorship, and the Communist demand for a united front.

### The Spanish Civil War

The President, in his opening speech, referred to the present struggle in Spain, and said:—

"Our hearts," he continued, "go out in honour and respect to our comrades in Spain, who are making their magnificent fight in defence of constitutional government."—*(Manchester Guardian, August 9th, 1936.)*

A telegram, approved by Congress, and sent to the Spanish Premier, read:—

This congress, representing the organised workers of Great Britain, profoundly moved by the heroic struggle of the Spanish people for the maintenance of freedom and democracy... In the confident assurance that they embody the unconquerable will of the Spanish nation to defeat the forces of Fascism and tyranny, we pledge afresh our utmost support to the Spanish people.

Such is the sentiment. But when it came to a showdown, to a question of translating sentimental platitudes into practical assistance, Congress showed its helplessness and complete inability to give any

material help to the Spanish workers. What the Spanish Government needs is arms, in the shape of battleships, aeroplanes and guns, with which to fight the rebel military forces. Congress could not provide these. However, to be consistent with its resolution of "utmost support," it might have adopted a policy of supporting the demand that the British Government supply arms to the Government in Spain. It did not do so, but carried, by 595 votes to 7, a resolution supporting the Government's policy of neutrality, that is, of withholding the supply of arms. An amendment favouring a policy of intervention was defeated on a card vote by 3,029,000 votes to 51,000. Intervention here meant supplying the Spanish Government with arms.

In the discussion that followed, Sir Walter Citrine said that the great need of the Spanish Government was to be supplied as rapidly as possible with war material to which it was entitled under international law. That it was felt that action should be taken to restrain Italy and Germany from supplying munitions to the Spanish military rebels. This could only be effected by placing a naval blockade round the coast of Spain. He continued: "... I could not say 'yes' to that." (*Daily Herald*, September 11th, 1936.) Nevertheless, Sir Walter did say "yes"

to the stupid telegram which pledged "utmost support to the Spanish people, and which could only be dangerously misleading to the Spanish workers and Government. He also stated that the

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



policy of neutrality was initiated by the Popular Front Government of France, and that the French Government had had a long-standing agreement with the Spanish Government to supply munitions, yet on July 25th (which was only one week after the civil war broke out) it decided it could no longer do so. He expressed the view that the overriding motive was clearly that the French Government was convinced that if it went on supplying Spain in the emergency with the munitions that the Spanish Government needed, there would in all probability be an outbreak of war in Europe.

Certain aspects of the question had apparently escaped Sir Walter Citrine's notice. Were Congress or the "neutral" powers able to exert sufficient pressure to compel the Fascist powers to observe neutrality, then that pressure could have been exerted to have prevented them from supplying arms to the rebels in the first place. There was, in fact, no essential difference in the policy of neutrality embodied in the resolution which he supported and the policy of intervention in the amendment which he opposed. There would be as much "danger to the peace of Europe" if the policy of neutrality had to be made effective as there would be in the policy of intervention. The neutral powers, Great Britain and France, are not willing to risk war whilst there is no direct threat to their interests. The enormous cost of war and the possibility of loss in markets and colonies induce an attitude of caution in international affairs and an anxiety to avoid doing anything that would provoke war. Which is quite unlike the swash-buckling sentiment of the British Governments when Empire building was in its heyday. Germany and Italy have less to lose and can afford to take advantage of the weakness, temporary or otherwise, of the other great powers, and with less fear of retaliation. Nobody believes that if Germany and Italy accepted the neutrality agreement that they would keep it. It is doubtful whether Sir Walter Citrine does.

### A Recruiting Speech

In the debate Mr. Bevin scored as a jingo. "We are satisfied," he said, "that we are not going to meet the Fascist menace by mere resolutions. . . . We are not going to meet it by pure Pacifism . . . the whole of the democratic powers had to say to Hitler and Mussolini 'Don't take us too cheaply.'"

And during the discussion on foreign affairs he said:—

"We have been on the retreat as democratic powers.

"We have weakened our prestige. There has been an assumption that we would never defend ourselves.

"That is not true.

"Fascism is not going to saddle itself on the whole earth, either by intrigue or the methods employed in Spain."—(*Daily Herald*, 11.9.36.)

The Government has probably noted that speech for use in future recruiting literature.

### The Communists and Spain

Other interesting facts which came out were: That the British Communist Party had not raised its voice to demand that Russia should send munitions to Spain. That the fact that the Russian Government had accepted the neutrality agreement and had operated it had never been mentioned by the French Communist Party. That the Russian trade unions had ceased collections for the Spanish workers on the instructions of the Russian Government. That the international fund for relief amounted to £45,000, of which £13,381 came from Britain. This represents a fraction of a penny per head of the trade union membership of Great Britain. (*Daily Herald*, September 11th, 1936.)

### Future Labour Government. Mr. Bevin's Boast

Resolutions favouring the abolition of the means test, the forty-hour week, the raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen, the abolition of the six-day waiting period for unemployed workers applying for insurance benefit, were approved. Congress knew that the passing of these resolutions anticipated the policy of a possible future Labour Government. In fact, speaking to the resolution in favour of a forty-hour week, Mr. Bevin said:—

"The resolution did imply that if after the next election they secured the return of a Labour Government they would expect that Government to introduce the 40-hour week."—(*Daily Herald*, 10.9.36.)

And later:—

"Never again must a Labour Minister be sent into office without all his plans prepared."

The latter statement is in the nature of an ultimatum or a threat. As Mr. Bevin gave it as his opinion that the Labour Party lacks the virility of the trade unions, perhaps he considered the threat necessary. The statement certainly gives ammunition to the opponents of the Labour Party, who maintain that it was the Trade Union "caucus" who insisted upon the Labour Party not entering the National Government in 1931, against that party's own wishes.

It is to be hoped that workers will remember Mr. Bevin's words when the next Labour Government is elected—particularly if he is in the Cabinet. The last Labour Government found its pledges embarrassing, and said so, and asked the workers not to press their claims. The bill to raise the school-leaving age, which was introduced by the last Labour Government, particularly showed that lack of "virility" to which Mr. Bevin referred. It was wrecked because of the dissensions between the rival religious factions within the Parliamentary Labour Party. The waiting period for the unemployed worker and the means test were then in operation and were justified by Labour Government spokesmen. Mr. Lansbury stated that he was not

in favour of an unemployed man having assistance unless some kind of means test were applied.

### Trade Union Soul-Saving

However, the fear of losing its members, votes, and trade union financial backing, might induce an effort in a future Labour Government to attempt to carry out its pledges. In the opinion of Sir Walter Citrine, the trade union movement "saved the soul of the Labour movement in 1931," when the Labour Government fell. However, having said it, it is to be hoped that Sir Walter will be as successful in keeping it unsullied in the future. Incidentally, his statement is a tacit admission that members of the Labour Government were in favour of entering the National Government in 1931, and only refrained from doing so because of pressure from the trade unions.

### Trade Union and Co-Operative Societies

Discussion on the General Council's report dealing with employment of trade union labour by co-operative societies and firms working on co-operative society contracts was interesting. Some of the discussion, as reported by the *Manchester Guardian* (September 11th, 1936), is as follows:—

Mr. A. G. Tomkins, of the Furnishing Trades' Association, said it was not correct to say that with the exception of a few small societies the goods sold were made under fair conditions; it would be more correct to say that the larger the co-operative society the bigger difficulty they had in preventing "rat" furniture from being sold.

Mr. W. Birch, of the Distributive and Allied Workers, Hyde, urged the General Council to take an active part in negotiations for conciliation machinery between the C.W.S. and the unions having members employed by it. It would be a great achievement if they could establish a fifty-shilling minimum for the men concerned.

"Rat" furniture is furniture made under sweated conditions of labour. In this case in workshops which contract for the co-operative societies. The *Daily Herald* reported Mr. Tomkins as having spoken on the General Council's report, but completely omitted the statements reproduced from the *Manchester Guardian's* report above. The *Herald* also omitted from its report of Mr. Birch's speech the statement that "it would be a great achievement if they could establish a fifty-shilling minimum for the men concerned."

### Communists and the United Front

When Congress discussed the General Council's report opposing a united front with the Communists, Sir Walter Citrine made a scathing speech. He said that one of the most amusing spectacles which contemporary political history would reveal was the attempt made by the Communist movement to ingratiate itself with the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party.

"After years of derision of the principles of the Labour movement, after using gallons of ink in denunciation of Labour's leaders, after abuse of its unions as pillars of capitalism

and reformist organisations, after denouncing its puny attempts to capture Parliament—regarded by the Communists as entirely ineffective as a means of emancipation of the people—after all the years that we have experienced since 1925, now we have the curiously incongruous spectacle of the Communist organisations wanting to come into our midst and be part of the movement they have so derided.

"The Communist party in Great Britain, as in every other country in Europe, is the mouthpiece of the Soviet Government. Everything that the Soviet Government decides will be repeated, parrot-like, by the Communists.

"... And when they speak here they are expressing the Russian Government's point of view."

### Membership

The Council's report showed an increase in trade union membership by approximately 300,000, but London, while it has 2,500,000 industrial workers, has only 350,000 trade unionists.

One last thing about the Congress. No Socialist voice was heard to penetrate the confused ideas and oratory, shedding light with the Socialist explanation of events.

H. W.

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M. Lipman, Settle Street, E.1, next door to Labour Exchange (Left hand side).

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### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that Cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.



## The Catholic Church and the Spanish Workers

AS the civil war drags on through its third month, many things stand out even more clearly than at the beginning. The rebels lack popular support in most parts of Spain but the outcome does not depend on popular support. It is fighting strength that counts. Correspondents of several British newspapers, including the *Times* (August 26th and September 4th), have reported that a majority of the conscript soldiers in the rebel armies, and the mass of workers and peasants behind the rebel lines would be disposed to desert to the Government side if given the opportunity. The rebel commanders, however, take care not to let the opportunity arise and when, as happened in the Alcazar at Toledo, rebel men, women and children tried to give themselves up, the rebel commanders did not hesitate to slaughter them, women and children as well as men—"a fusillade from the insurgents cut them down"—so wrote an eye-witness, Mr. Harold Pemberton, correspondent of the *Daily Express* (September 21st). The rebels dare not rely on conscripts but they can rely on their mercenary Moorish troops for as long as the money lasts. The position, therefore, is that the Government forces are being slowly strangled under the combined pressure of foreign Governments, mercenary troops, and lavish supplies of money and munitions. If the money and the munitions continue then the rebels will prove, as has been proved before, that a military force can, for a time at least, dragoon a hostile civil population by sheer ruthlessness. How ruthless the Military-Catholic rebels are has been exposed in an earlier despatch from Harold Pemberton, published in the *Daily Express* on August 27th.

Basing his statements on what he had actually seen with the rebel armies, he wrote:—

While the Communists are committing atrocities, the rebels are killing wholesale, mathematically and methodically—as a military expedient. No one must be left alive as a possible threat to the rear of their motorised columns. There is no attempt at a trial. Killings in Seville average 30 to 40 a day. After Merida was captured 1,000 were killed. Village killings average 10 to 15 a day—until the supply of victims is exhausted. It is estimated that there will be half a million deaths before peace comes... On leaving Merida with Photographer Tovey we were offered "Communist ears" as souvenirs.

It is no wonder that the rebels in due course expelled a number of British journalists, including the correspondents of the *Times*, *Morning Post* and *Daily Express*. They were anxious that the world should not know how they carried on their fight for "patriotism and religion."

It is well that workers should take notice of this further example of the ruthlessness of a propertied class fighting to retain its privileged position. The lesson to be learned from it is not that workers should try to emulate their savagery but that we should realise that while power is in

the hands of a panic-stricken ruling class they will stop at no atrocity to gain their ends.

### The Catholic Church Commits Suicide

Forefront among those who glory in the rebellion, justify the rebel atrocities, or seek to blacken the Government with misrepresentations are the Catholic Church in Spain, the Pope, and the bulk of the prominent Catholics in England along with their Press. The *Universe* has vied with the *Daily Mail* in gutter journalism. The Catholic Bishops, like Bishop Amigo of Southwark, have assisted in a widespread campaign to whitewash the rebels. Bishop Amigo was able to discover that they and their Moorish mercenaries "are fighting for God and their country" to prevent its "total destruction" (*Manchester Guardian*, September 4th). The *Catholic Tablet*, wholeheartedly on the side of the rebels but above the disreputable behaviour of such papers as the *Universe*, was nearer the truth when it admitted (August 1st) that the rebellion was begun by the rebels for "economic and class reasons" and could be broadly described "as a class war." The *Tablet*, however, was more far-seeing than Bishop Amigo, and has backed the rebels with a certain amount of misgiving: fortunately, a well-founded misgiving, for the civil war is going to do the Catholic Church in Spain more harm than 30 years of propaganda. Whether the rebels win or lose there are millions of Spanish workers and peasants who will never forget that when they tried to climb out of hideous poverty the Catholic Church helped the landowners and military leaders to grind them down again, by force of arms and with the aid of Moorish troops and every device of modern warfare. For every Spanish worker who hated the Catholic Church before the rebellion for its century-long exploitation of the poor and defence of oppression, there will be ten in future.

One Catholic and Protestant lie needs to be nailed down, that is that the Government forces wantonly organised attacks on non-combatant Priests and Nuns. The Catholic Church right from the beginning openly sided with the rebels and gave them every material and other support in its power. Does the Catholic Church, in face of that, really expect to enjoy the rights of a neutral? And having taken the side of the rebels against the Government and its working-class supporters, does the Catholic Church expect to be received everywhere with open arms? Nevertheless there has not been a scrap of published evidence that the Spanish Government encouraged or condoned any such attacks. Where attacks were made they were the actions of individuals or groups, blindly hitting out at those whom they regarded as their enemies.

One argument used by the defenders of the Pope is that he protests always and everywhere

against attacks on Priests. It is only a pretence, as can be shown from very recent history. Where and when did the Pope ever protest against the killing of Abyssinian Christian Priests by the Pope's friends, the Government of Italy? It was reported in the *Daily Telegraph* on September 2nd that the Bishop of Dessie "has been shot by a firing squad on the market-place, the chief square of Addis Ababa." His crime was precisely that of many Spanish Priests, "inciting a group of Abyssinian warriors" to resist the Italians. When and where did the Pope protest? Or the *Universe*? Or the *Daily Mail*?

Before leaving the subject of the Catholic Church it must be said that a minority of Catholics in this country who saw the economic and class character of the Spanish conflict have resisted the mass pressure of the Catholic authorities and have continued to stand on the side of the republicans. In view of the difficulties of their position the fact that they stood their ground deserves recognition.

A wider problem, of which the reactionary nature of the Catholic Church is only a part, is the power of the capitalist Press and political parties to stampede large numbers of workers whenever an issue affecting property rights arises. The trade unions which voted money for the relief of the victims of the rebellion were immediately faced with opposition from members misled by the Rothermere newspapers and others of like character. In passing, it is important to notice that condemnation of the *Daily Mail* did not come only from sources sympathetic to the Spanish Government but also from the *Conservative Spectator*, which charged the *Mail* with exhibiting "a colour-blindness which leaves atrocities invisible except when Reds commit them."

There is only one remedy for the evil of lying propaganda. Changing the policy of those who control the Press is out of the question. All that can be done is the slow work of enlightening the workers, teaching them to discriminate and apply their own critical judgment to everything presented to them. Only when the workers are immune to the effects of lying propaganda—and not before—will the evil cease.

One lesson taught again by the events in Spain, that can never be emphasised too strongly, is the danger of going ahead in advance of what is justified by the degree of understanding and unity achieved by the mass of the population. The Spanish workers were, and still are, divided by their outlook, and by their allegiance to rival organisations. This encouraged the rebels to begin the rebellion and now, day by day, it enables them to win battles owing to the terrible lack of co-ordination among the Government militias, born of mutual mistrust as well as of inexperience. One ominous feature is that the Spanish Fascists are now setting out to win over the Syndicalists to

their side. Imitating Mussolini, who successfully won over thousands of Syndicalists to the Fascist ranks in Italy, the Spanish Fascists are calling their Movement a National Syndicalist one, and giving it aims such as those Hitler used with big effect to gain working-class support in Germany. They appeal, particularly, to the Syndicalists' traditional opposition to Parliament and political action. Should this succeed, Spain may sooner or later go Fascist with the backing of large numbers of workers, as did Italy and Germany. Here, again, the only remedy is the slow one of Socialist education, and until the necessary preparatory work has been performed any attempt to force the pace spells reaction—on top of failure—from which it may take years to recover. H.

## New Premises Fund

Again we have to remind readers that we need money urgently for our New Premises Fund. When the present renewal runs out, in about six months, we shall be faced with the need to secure other and larger headquarters. Our freedom of choice will be strictly limited by the amount of money we have in hand to enable us to meet removal and furnishing costs, and to pay the higher rent until our extended activities make it possible to pay the higher rent out of current income.

Send your donations to the Treasurer, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

A list of donations is printed below:—

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### PARLIAMENTARY FUND DONATIONS.

Brought forward, £11 7s. 9d.; Battersea Branch, 14s.; Battersea Branch, 7s.; Lewisham Branch, £1 10s.; A. Mas Mundel, 4s.; Bloomsbury Branch, £1 6s. 1d.; Battersea Branch, 5s.; Battersea Branch, 14s.—£16 7s. 10d.



## Lady Eden's Appeal, and Ours

LADY EDEN, in common with many other women, lost two sons in the last War. This, however, was the only thing she had in common with those other women, the vast majority of whom were women of the working class. In the *News Chronicle* of July 6th, 1936, she says:—

"I have the deepest sympathy and the greatest respect for the unemployed, especially the miners," she continued, "but I do feel that among the younger men who are workless idleness is encouraged."

"One does feel that here is a big opportunity to join up in the Territorials instead of doing nothing."

"The Army is a fine profession and every man who joins it is all the better for it. I appeal to mothers to encourage their sons to join the Army and not to be sloppy about it."

The appeal to those who have nothing, to fight for those who have everything, to protect and conserve property which does not belong to them, is the last word in effrontery. Working class women should feel particularly infuriated at this titled woman's allusions to their "sloppiness." Private property has left a trail of misery and tears which the workers of to-day are still following. Many women have expressed their indignation in the Press, but not one of them voiced her resentment from a class standpoint. Resentment is not enough. We have to make it effective. We can only do that when we understand the cause of the trouble, namely, the class basis of society. The class that Lady Eden represents is the capitalist class. They own the means by which we, the workers, live. The vast machinery of industry is the private property of a small section of the people. The huge majority must, in order to live, get a job for wages from one or other group of the property-owning class. From when we leave school to the time when we receive a pittance called an old-age pension, this urgent necessity is ever upon us. We produce millions of tons of commodities for our masters' markets. When those markets are over-supplied we are put on short time or are out of work. Lady Eden does not suggest the capitalist class foregoing any of its profits, in order to reduce hours whilst increasing wages, as a means of keeping young workers in work. Her plan is to use the whip of poverty to drive us into the military machine. Well, by the grace of capitalism, even that cannot be done wholesale. Because capitalism undernourishes the workers, 36 per cent. of those who have jumped to the crack of the whip and presented their puny bodies for the Army medico's examination have to be rejected. The Army is a fine profession, says Lady Eden. Certain ribald songs and verses composed by the rank and file express things rather differently. Desertions from the ranks are fairly common, and much persuasive literature has to be used to get recruits. Whether or not the Army is a better or worse job of work doesn't matter, however. The Army is a weapon

which serves to protect the private property of the master class. The appeal to the workers in time of war is couched in different words from that in times of peace. Then we are called upon in the names of liberty and freedom. Our homes (those nasty little council houses), our wives and children, surely, we are asked, these are worth fighting for? Honour and glory, patriotism, and a host of other time-worn fancies, strut upon the stage and are frantically applauded. These are but the preliminary to the bloody murders to follow. But now, in time of peace, the Army is to be the keeper of the morale of the unemployed. The real facts are so very obvious, even though the veneer has been laid on thick. India, China, Africa, and the Mediterranean, are some of the places where British capital is invested. There you will find the English Army, Navy and Air Force in times of peace. The armed forces are used to protect English capital at home and abroad. Incidentally, although the Police Force is usually adequate, the masters have no hesitation in using the State forces in order to quell industrial disturbances at home. The Air Force is particularly useful in quelling disorder that arises in places in the Empire difficult for soldiers on foot to reach. The master class both amass their wealth and protect it by means of the working class. When we withdraw our support from them their system will collapse. The master class in this country adopt the policy, as far as they can, of getting the willing support of their dupes. Capitalists in other countries have less polished methods, but always the result is the same. Upon the efforts of the workers the whole structure of society rests. When we decide that no longer will we support a non-producing and useless class, then can we reorganise society upon sane lines. We will establish Socialism, and women in particular will gain much from this change. Women out at work find life drab and uninteresting. The married woman's life is even worse. The cares and responsibility of the home and family make her old long before her time. Enclosed within four walls her life lacks change and interest. She becomes an echo and a shadow of that poor male who becomes a master, in his imagination, when he leaves the factory gates and enters his own door. Lady Eden has addressed her appeal to the mothers, so do we. We want them in the Socialist movement. We want them to reply to Lady Eden, that they are not prepared to urge their sons to support the capitalist class in any sphere. Let them reply that there can be no peace while one class is dominated by another. The class war is on all day and every day. They can urge their sons to fight in that, by voting with their fathers, mothers, sisters and wives for Socialism.

MRS. O.

## Here and There

### "Socialism" in Russia

Mr. Maisky, the Russian Ambassador, recently addressed the Liberal Summer School on Russian foreign policy. In the course of his lecture he said:—

But at the same time we fully realise that we are still very far from our achieving our goal. We are only half way there, and it will take decades and decades to complete the construction of the Socialist society, which at a later stage will be transformed into Communist society. This is a very long development which will absorb the efforts of more than any generation.—(*Manchester Guardian*, August 3rd.)

Communists and others who expected the millennium in Russia after the successive Five-Year Plans might note.

### Britain for the British

A newspaper comments:—

British Equity, the actors' Trade Union, has won a big victory in the case of an American show which is shortly to open in London.

Equity insisted that an equal number of English girls be put into the show. Failing that, the permits would be opposed.

At the present time, when there are so many people out of work in the theatres, the action of Equity and its result cannot be too highly commended.

The newspaper was the *Daily Worker* (August 10th, 1936).

There is a much bigger victory awaiting the workers of all countries, and when there are fewer misguided reformers to over-emphasise the importance of minor things, such as this, the workers will begin to understand why and how they should obtain it.

### Straws in the Wind

Sir Abe Bailey, one of the principal Transvaal (S. Africa) mine owners, is a staunch patriot and imperialist—which, in the circumstances, is not very surprising. He writes to *The Times* (August 6th):—

I should like to see our National Government still further strengthened by the inclusion of the best elements of the Liberal and Labour parties and of some of those distinguished supporters of the present Government who are not members of the Cabinet. Such a Government, pinning its faith to the patriotism of its people, would be strong enough to tell the truth to Englishmen (always at their best when up against it) and to take those measures—I believe conscription should be one of them—which will alone give security to this island and its overseas communications.

Sir Abe Bailey sees the rise of other imperialist powers in Africa, where he has immense industrial and financial interests, and is obviously nervous. We do not doubt that if the Empire were faced with an international crisis the "best elements" of the Liberal and Labour parties would show their willingness to join and support the Government in defending capitalism.

### Communists in Canada

According to the *Winnipeg Free Press* (July 30th), Manitoba has had the honour of electing the

first Communist M.P. on the American continent. The newspaper report says:—

Litterick became the first Communist to be elected to a provincial or state assembly on the American Continent and the second member of the party to become a member of parliament or legislature in the British Empire.

Should the illusion prevail that Communists abroad differ from those in England in their methods of vote-catching we quote from Mr. Litterick's election programme.

Provision of work for unemployed at trade union rates of pay.

Clearance of slums, home construction and other necessary work.

Abolition of the two per cent. wage tax.

Extension and more rigid enforcement of the Minimum Wage Act.

Provincial Health Act to cover all with incomes under \$2,000 per year.

Old Age Pensions of \$50.00 per month, payable at 60.

Extension of municipal franchise to all residents over 21 years.

Extension of municipal democracy—abolition of municipal administrators.

Adequate system of vocational and technical training.

Provincial grants for scholarships and subsidies for needy students.

Opposition to all attempts at railroad amalgamation.

Five year moratorium on interest and principal of all provincial indebtedness.

A steeply graduated increase in the corporation income tax.

A steeply graduated increase in the income tax on all incomes over \$2,000 per year, with adequate exemptions for all dependents.

Capital levy on surplus reserve funds of corporations and banks.

There is no mention in it of Socialism or Communism—of course; nothing which the average supporter of capitalism, with very little adjustment, would oppose; and much which has already been applied by Mussolini and Hitler, such as the "Capital Levy . . ." and "A steeply graduated increase in the income tax. . . ."

H. W.

## CORRECTIONS

### "The Menace of Aerial Warfare"

Mr. L. G. Savage, the writer of this series of articles, asks us to point out that the instalment which appeared in the August issue contained two errors. In column one, page 123, last paragraph, "magnetic or coil" should read "magneto or coil."

The figures in the last paragraph, column one, page 124, are incorrect. 27,000 square yards is not 15 square miles, but only a small part of a square mile. It will be observed, however, that 27,000 square yards is the area likely to be contaminated by liquid mustard gas, and bears no relation to the area likely to be affected by gas in vapour form.

ED. COMM.



## Outdoor Propaganda Meetings

SUNDAYS			4th	11th	18th	25th	
Brockwell Park ... ..	3.0 p.m.		Willmott	Turner	Kohn	Nesbit	
Finsbury Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.		Turner	Grainger	Willmott	Ambridge	
Victoria Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.		Grainger	Lestor	Turner	Robins	
Regents Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.		Kohn	Willmott	Nesbit	Lestor	
Cock Hotel, East Ham ...	8.0 p.m.		Lestor	Nesbit	Goulder, F.	Reginald	
Queens Road, Bayswater	8.0 p.m.		Ambridge	Robins	Banks	Hayden	
Clapham Common ... ..	3.0 p.m.		Nesbit	Ambridge	Hayden	Turner	
Whipps Cross ... ..	8.0 p.m.		Reginald	Berry, V.	Lestor	Grainger	
SATURDAYS			3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
Rushcroft Road ... ..	7.30 p.m.		Lestor	Ambridge	Banks	Willmott	Nesbit
Roper Street, Eltham ...	7.30 p.m.		—	Reginald	—	Hayden	—
Undine St., Tooting ...	8.0 p.m.		Banks	Reginald	Hayden	Ambridge	Willmott

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, from June 10th, over "Ralphs Cafe," 7 Broadway, Chadwell Heath. Discussion after business. Communications to Sec. 5, Cannington Rd., Dagenham, or P. Golding (Dues Sec.), "Basra," Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on first and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., A. Miller, 14, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E.2.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[Monthly. Twopence

*The Working  
Class ought to  
inscribe on . .  
their banner  
the . . . . .  
revolutionary  
watchword . .  
"Abolition of  
the wages . .  
system"—*

K. MARX.

## What to Do About Fascism The Fascist Pot and the Communist Kettle

**I**N the sacred name of liberty Sir Oswald Mosley—who proposes, like his heroes, Mussolini and Hitler, to destroy all opposition parties if he gets power—demands the right to lead his blackshirt troops into the East End. In the sacred name of liberty the Communists—who propose here, as in Russia, to crush all opposition parties if they get power—call upon us all to rally against Sir Oswald Mosley. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, which does not propose to prevent anyone, anywhere, from voicing his opinions and organising peacefully to propagate them, is completely and permanently opposed to both of these suppressive movements. We are opposed to their objects, their methods and their

secret finances, but principally to their objects because they neither of them have the solution for the problem of our age. The underlying discontent with things as they are in State-capitalist Russia is so widespread that the dictator and his yes-men are thoroughly scared lest one exile in Norway should prove a rallying point and en-

danger their positions. In the Fascist lands poverty and promises are as much the order of the day as in the capitalist democracies. Italy and Germany are as much the paradise of the moneyed men, the exploiters of human labour, as England and America. Nothing is changed except the patriotic trimmings and the colour of the shirt.

### The Right to Wear what Clothes We Wish

When Sir Oswald Mosley, fresh from his visits of adoration to Mussolini and Hitler, asks if in this country "a man might not wear the clothes he wished to wear?" as he did in an address to Manchester business men on October 9th (*Manchester Guardian*, October 10th), he at once betrays the limitations of the Fascist movement, and of his own understanding. Nowhere in the capitalist world, whether under Baldwin, Sir Oswald's former political associate, or under the foreign Fascist dictators, at whose feet he now sits, can a man wear what clothes he wishes to wear. *All he can wear is what his class position enables him to afford.* If he is a typical worker, a wealth-producer, he will wear clothes that are cheap and nasty, tasteless and inadequate. If he is a member of the propertied class, whether Liberal or Nazi, Conservative or Fascist, then, and only then, can he exercise his choice about the way he lives, including the clothes he wears. This is the crucial test of all the reformist movements from Mosley to Morrison. None of them dare face up to the question why it is that they propose to use power to preserve the class ownership of the means of production and distribution.

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### The Fascists Can't Cure Capitalism

True, the Fascists can point to the manifold reformist activities of the Fascist Governments—and to the decline of unemployment. But this is now the favourite theme of all the apologists for capitalism, everywhere. Capitalism, after its latest crisis, is going through an expanding phase. So unemployment declines because of the expansion of trade and also because of the expansion of capitalism's most thriving industries: armies and armaments. The Berlin correspondent of the *Economist* (September 19th, 1936) reports that the official number of unemployed is down to 1,098,000, and adds:—

The Reich Unemployment Board considers that the shortage of skilled labour in certain industries is the result of compulsory military service.

And what does it mean, anyway, when we admit that all the capitalist Governments are busy with schemes for patching up this, that and the other evil of capitalism? It means that capitalism is always producing more evils, and that the Fascists are as incapable as any other capitalist Government of solving them. Catholic Dictator Schuschnigg, in Austria, plays the age-old game of bread and circuses because the "Corporative State" is as many as all the other variations of capitalist rule. Read what the Vienna correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* writes:—

The Government is presenting 50,000 tickets of admission to football matches, 50,000 cinema, and 10,000 theatre tickets to the members of the (Fatherland) Front. About 400,000 free breakfasts and free railway transport for all will be provided.—(*Daily Telegraph*, October 15th, 1936.)

This was Schuschnigg's great victory parade at which the population were to give a spontaneous demonstration of loyalty and enthusiasm. The attendance was splendid—it was compulsory for large numbers of workers: "attend or lose your job" was the threat. Still the dictator failed. His "promises of improved conditions for the masses were received without enthusiasm. When he denounced Socialism and democracy the great crowd remained silent." (*Daily Telegraph*, October 19th, 1936). It appears that the workers opened their mouths for the free meal and then kept them obstinately shut.

In Italy, a land of semi-paupers and millionaires, like the rest of the big powers, Mussolini blethers about Empire and prosperity like any Conservative: but he cannot cure unemployment, he does not find a remedy for desperate poverty, and he never fails to look after capitalist interests. What else can he do, having no choice but to carry on capitalism? On Tuesday, October 13th, his Government instructed stockbrokers to submit the names and addresses of all clients who buy industrial shares. This was at 9.30 a.m. The Fascist syndicate of brokers promptly held a meeting and passed a resolution that "it would

be advisable to close all the bourses rather than have to obey the latest order." The Government instantly climbed down and agreed by 9.45 a.m. to waive the order. (*Daily Telegraph*, October 14th, 1936.) This is Mosley's paradise for the workers in which he affects to believe that money no longer rules.

Then in Germany, where the Nazis claim to have got rid of talking-shops, and introduced Socialist deeds instead of capitalist and Labour Party promises, Hitler stages his own brand of circuses for keeping the workers' attention off their own slavish conditions. The Nuremberg rally of the Nazi Party in September, at which Hitler begged the German workers to keep their eyes fixed on poverty in Russia (lest they should look nearer home), was a splendiferous jamboree costing £2,000,000 (*Daily Telegraph*, September 8th, 1936). It contained all the fun of the political fair, every species of mental dope calculated to stop a worker from thinking.

Then, at home, what has Mosley to offer except a mixed bag of reforms of capitalism picked up on his passage from the Conservative Party, via the Labour Party, I.L.P., and New Party to the British Union of Fascists. I.L.P. reforms—40 years old—plus Communist violence, plus the current exaggerated economic nationalism and patriotism, plus half-baked Stafford Cripps doctrines of rule by Order in Council. That is the sum total of Mosley's programme: it is as rotten as the rubbish heaps from which it has been gathered.

### The Fascists and Disorder

The Fascist technique of propaganda and gaining power is simple, but its effectiveness depends entirely on the level of political knowledge and experience of the workers and on the behaviour of the opponents of Fascism. Fascism (copying most of the traditional methods of the Labour Parties) exploits every phase of working-class and small-capitalist discontent. It denounces Jews, Freemasons, Catholics, Trade Union officials, bankers, all big corporations, bureaucracy, Parliament, financial scandals, unemployment, etc., etc. Where it scores over the older methods is in provoking disorder with the assistance of those who believe they are hindering it. Given an increasing number of marches and the appearance if not even the reality of disorder the Fascist leaders know that they can count, with certainty, on growing support from numerous quarters. They get the support of all who have grievances against Jews, Freemasons, and so on, but, above all, they get the support of large numbers of people who, knowing little of politics, are simply scared by disorder. Such people, if they believe they have to choose between the Communist Party and the Fascists, choose the latter. Every riot brings Mosley support from them.

How, it may be asked, do the Fascists manage to win over workers who formerly supported the Labour Parties; as they succeeded in doing in Italy and Germany, and are doing here? Why is the Labour Party reformist demagoguery less successful than it used to be? The answer is simple.

### Labour Parties and Fascism

Before the War the world was obviously governed by and for the propertied class, landed and plutocratic, on a more or less restricted Parliamentary franchise. The inevitable discontent with capitalism naturally drove workers to support democratic parties claiming to be particularly concerned with political and social reforms.

After the War the franchise was made more or less universal in nearly all countries, and Labour or Liberal-Labour Governments became common. With what result? Capitalism continued, therefore discontent continued. But now the discontent had to find a new outlet. Having tried capitalism under democracy, the workers were ripe for a new kind of demagogue, one preaching dictatorship. Renegade Labour leaders hastened to adjust themselves to the change of fashion. They reaped the harvest, but who sowed the seed? None other than the Labour Parties. It is they who poisoned politics with their doctrines of reforming capitalism without abolishing it.

### The Key to Modern Politics

The idea still survives that politics is concerned with a struggle of ideas about Government, trade, etc. Nothing could be further from the truth. Politics is concerned with the ownership of the land, factories, railways and all the accumulated property of the country. The small minority who own and control all that matters, the late Sir J. Ellerman with his £50 million, Joseph Rank and Lord Nuffield, reputed to be worth upwards of £20 million each, the Lady Houstons and the Wills and Coats families, and all the rest of the owning class, have one overriding interest, one motive, one determination. They may tell simple-minded newspaper readers that "Money means nothing to me. I could just as easily go back to where I started—in fact, I might be happier if I did" (Lord Nuffield, *News Chronicle*, October 17th, 1936), but their actions, individual and combined, belie their words. No exploiting class ever gives up its privileged position until it has tried every conceivable device to retain what it has.

Broadly speaking, in the 20th century the capitalist class are on the defensive. Ideas are on the march. Workers are beginning to think. From the capitalist standpoint that movement must be stopped, destroyed, divided, or turned into blind alleys—anything to preserve capitalism. If the discontented organise to secure reforms the capitalists can try buying off the leaders, offering small concessions to the rank and file, playing off

one section against another, Catholic against Protestant, Jew against Arab, German against English, Blackshirt against Greenshirt and Red-shirt. And if one group forges ahead and becomes influential, then the capitalists must come to terms with it—hence Labour Governments, and it, in due course, the popularity of Labour Governments wanes then the new rounders-up of working-class votes, the Fascists, must be given their turn. So capitalism goes on.

In Italy and Germany Mussolini and Hitler trod on the heels of discredited Syndicalism and Labourism, backed by capitalist money and under the protecting arm of the State.

Now Mosley says that he is receiving support from English industrial capitalists (see Rome *Giornale d'Italia*, quoted in *News Chronicle*, October 19th, 1936). They hope that he will be able to give capitalism—meaning themselves—a further lease of life.

### If the Workers Go Fascist

Many who are alarmed at the growth of Fascism in England talk in a panicky way of fighting or crushing the movement, and appeal to the Government to ban uniforms. This is all so much waste of words. The issue rests with the workers in the main. If the workers understood capitalism and Socialism they would not fall for the Fascist claptrap—but neither would they fall for Liberal, Labour or Conservative claptrap. If, on the other hand, the workers here can, as in Italy and Germany, be won over in their hundreds of thousands to the Fascist programme then all talk of suppression is idle. If the workers want Fascist Government they will get it, as they got Labour Government. At certain stages of the Hitler movement the Prussian and German Governments did try to ban his movement, forbid uniforms and demonstrations, etc., but they failed to stem the drift towards him.

The only answer to Fascism, as to other capitalist-reformist movements, is knowledge and understanding. Their economic programme would deceive no worker who gave serious thought to it—which is, doubtless, one reason why the Mosleyites prefer riotous demonstrations to quiet meetings at which their programme has to be stated in all its poverty.

The most seductive claim of the Fascists is that they are Socialists. Hitler repeated this again in Berlin on October 6th (*News Chronicle*, October 7th, 1936), and it is the common argument of the Mosley movement nowadays. Every Labourite will laugh at the notion that the Mosleyite programme of reforms is Socialist; but they have little enough reason to laugh. Who, if not the Labour Party and I.L.P., started this dishonest practice? Who made it possible for Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express* to say (October 1st) that it



opposes Socialism but not the Labour Party—"that is a very different thing."

If the Fascists can get support by misrepresenting Socialism, that is largely due to all the Labour speakers who have done the same in the past.

### The Struggle Will Go On

The rise of Fascism to power in this country is, to say the least, improbable. The problems facing the British capitalists, in particular the international situation, are not of a kind to make them give up flattering the Labour and Trade Union leaders in order to encourage Mosley. At a pinch a more likely development, if the situation threatens war, is an enlarged "National Government" in which Trade Union leaders and Mosley

work happily together defending British capitalism.

What is more important to remember about Fascism here and abroad is that the eventual failure of the Fascist movements is as certain as the failure of Labour Governments which helped them to rise. Fascism is incapable of making capitalism work satisfactorily. It is an impossible task. Capitalism goes on producing discontent under the surface. The future of Fascism is forecast in the growing activity of anti-Fascists in Italy and Austria. Sooner or later all the Fascist facades of capitalism will fall away, leaving the main problem still to be tackled. The workers will still have to be won over to Socialism. That is the task for Socialists, whether under Dictatorship or Democracy.

H.

## Notes by the Way

### "Daily Express" Gets Into a Tangle

THE *Daily Express*, like other Beaverbrook papers, always refers to the Labour Party as the Socialist Party, just to mislead its readers. The only defence ever offered for the misrepresentation is that whatever name the Labour Party goes under it is, in fact, the Socialist Party. But read the following from an *Express* editorial (October 1st, 1936):—

The *Daily Express* is not the enemy of the Socialist Party, though Mr. Bevin and others profess to think so. The *Daily Express*, it is true, opposes Socialism, but that is a very different thing. If Mr. Bevin, or Mr. Morrison, or Sir Walter Citrine came to power here the *Daily Express* would not tremble at those men nor fear their policies.

So the *Express* calls the Labour Party the Socialist Party because it isn't a Socialist Party! Now let Beaverbrook lie his way out of the tangle into which he has got himself.

### On to Prosperity

Mr. Francis Williams, City Editor of the *Daily Herald*, promises prosperity because France has "gone off gold," and "the gold standard is dead" (*Daily Herald*, September 28th, 1936). Five years ago Mr. Williams made the same promise as regards Great Britain. But where is prosperity? Only Mr. Williams knows. The following, from *The Daily Telegraph* (September 28th, 1936), has a bearing on the point:—

When eggs were offered to some schoolchildren in Cumberland they did not know how to eat them. They had never had eggs before. Other children at Barnsley, Yorkshire, refused custard, butter and bananas because they were unfamiliar foods.

These instances of the effect of prolonged unemployment were given on Saturday by Mrs. G. R. Evans, a delegate to the National Federation of Class Teachers' Conference, held at Nottingham.

Mr. C. S. Evans, of Rhondda, said that in the area where he taught many of the children were unable to remember their fathers ever having worked,

and could not tell him even what their fathers' occupations were.

In his class he had never known fewer than 50 per cent. of the fathers to be unemployed. Only on Fridays did many of the children get any breakfast at all, and that was because their fathers drew unemployment pay on Thursday.—(*Daily Telegraph*, September 28th, 1936.)

When will Mr. Williams learn that capitalism, not any special currency policy, is the cause of working-class poverty?

### Words Worth Remembering

The plain fact is, there is no defence against the horrors of war except peace.

Robert Lynd (*News-Chronicle*, Sept. 19th, 1936).

If a war occurs, Mr. Lloyd George will doubtless be urging the workers to fight in order to save democracy; but this is what he told a *News Chronicle* representative:—

If we do not establish peace democracy is doomed, for democracy will never survive another world war. (*News-Chronicle*, Sept. 21st.)

### A Prophecy of War

Amidst all the current forecasts of war it is interesting to look back at some earlier ones. One paper on June 10th, 1922, prophesied war for certainty, saying that it was only "a matter of time, not even perhaps of years but of months."

But the war was not the same war that is being prophesied to-day. It was "war with America, war with America and France."

The paper was the *Communist*, June 10th, 1922, official organ of the Communist Party.

### The Great War to Create Wars

The great lie of the Great War was that it was a war to end war. By that subtle falsehood the misgivings about the real purpose and cause of

the war were swept aside and the blind patriotism of the workers was exploited for the protection of capitalism. Now Mr. Amery, sometime First Lord of the Admiralty, Minister for the Colonies, etc., etc., admits that the war, so far from removing the cause of war, has made the position worse. He was speaking at the annual meeting of the Royal Society of St. George at the Mansion House on April 23rd. (See report in *Times*, April 24th, 1936.)

Unfortunately a good many people were of the opinion that as we had had one great war it was possible to eliminate the causes of war and patriotism was superfluous. There was, of course, far more to it than that. The process which started in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth was accelerated by the War, and the whole growth of national societies inevitably made for closer contacts. We might deplore some of the excesses which their emotions led many people to commit, as shown in Italy, Germany, and Russia, but it was not for us to ignore the intensity of national feeling. If we were to maintain our freedom we had to be strong, and it was the duty of all to widen the influence of our national feelings. (Italics ours.)

### Poor Germany!

One of the stories put about by German nationalist propagandists in the years after the War was that the peace treaty had "ruined" Germany and reduced everyone to deplorable depths of poverty. The story was accepted by Labourites in this country and has been adopted by Hitler. It was not, and is not, true. What happened was that many of the German capitalists who had been exceedingly wealthy before the War lost heavily through Germany's defeat, and some, indeed, were ruined. Others lost their fortunes to new groups of capitalists (Stinnes & Co.) during the years of inflation of the currency. Nevertheless, capitalism continued in Germany without any appreciable change under the Social Democrats and Governments with which they co-operated, and where there is capitalism there will be found contrasts of wealth and poverty. In 1931, for example, there were 40 people in Germany whose property was assessed for purposes of taxation at over 10 million marks each, that is roughly over £500,000.

There were 2,465 with over one million marks (roughly £50,000), 115 with over five million marks (£250,000). These figures from official sources were reproduced in *Freiheit*, organ of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany (June 7th, 1931). As in England and elsewhere, it was the working class who were poor, and Hitler has done nothing to alter that condition of affairs.

He is now talking, as his predecessors did, of dividing up the big estates in East Prussia. The Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* reports (September 2nd, 1936) that it is calculated that in Germany as a whole there are 412 big landowners who hold between them nearly 6,500,000 acres, or

enough land to support one million smallholders. Nearly 95 per cent. of all agricultural and forest land in Germany is owned by 22,000 proprietors, that is by less than one per cent. (actually .6 per cent.) of the persons owning land. It remains to be seen how Hitler will fare in handling a problem which brought down other German Governments. Like them he has to face the discontent of the landless on the one side, and the power of land-owners and big business on the other.

### Douglasites Floored by Facts. The Rise and Fall of Unemployment

Nothing shows up so clearly the failure of Major Douglas and his followers to understand the nature of capitalism as their inability to explain the ups and downs of production and trade. A case in point is their forecast of constantly increasing unemployment. Socialists were not bamboozled in 1931 into the belief that the crisis was any different in kind from all the other crises of capitalism. Socialists were, therefore, able to predict, with confidence, that the increase of unemployment would, in due course, give place to a decrease as capitalist trade and production entered on another phase of expansion. The Douglasites, on the contrary, ignorant of the similar blundering prophecies of their predecessors a century ago, hastened to predict that capitalism would never recover, and that the volume of unemployment would mount continuously without a break. Let us see what events have done to their prophecy.

In its issue of January 25th, 1934, the Douglas journal, *New English Weekly*, wrote:—

As technology develops, there will be a growing mass of unemployed—20 per cent., 30 per cent., 40 per cent. or more—who are deprived of all demand-power, except such as we allow them by way of the dole.

Now let us contrast that prophecy of unemployment increasing from 20 per cent. to 30 per cent., 40 per cent. and more, with the actual happenings, as shown in the Ministry of Labour returns as to the percentages of insured workers unemployed.

January, 1933.	... 23 per cent.
January, 1934.	... 18.6 per cent.
January, 1935.	... 17.7 per cent.
January, 1936.	... 16.3 per cent.
June, 1936.	... 13.1 per cent.
September, 1936.	... 12.4 per cent.

In due course capitalism will experience another crash and then the Douglasites, silent as to their past failure, will rush into print, repeating their fallacious theories and prophecies.

H.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION"

48 pages.

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## Capitalism as Seen from the Air

**D**URING a recent flight over south-eastern England, the writer saw an interesting picture of capitalism in miniature. Passing over a picturesque garden suburb, we saw below about forty new red-roofed pleasant-looking suburban houses, each with large enclosed garden attached. Immediately afterwards we passed over a large private estate, and into this the so-called garden estate could have been planted four times over. In the centre stood a large mansion, and, adjoining it, another smaller mansion. This smaller mansion doubtless housed the personal and domestic bodyguard of the occupant of the principal mansion. The two mansions were surrounded by a small forest of trees, and this again was in the centre of a large emerald green park, on whose fringe could be seen a border of tall trees—a narrow fringe of forest—the whole enclosed in a high wall shutting out the nonentities on the other side.

Setting one's mind at work, it was easy, in the light of a knowledge of contemporary social conditions, to imagine the workers in the garden suburb engaging in the production of some useful commodity, such as margarine, in a factory of which the inhabitant of the mansion was the principal shareholder; one could also imagine them "buying" their houses through a building society, of which the aforesaid gentleman might quite conceivably be the chairman; his interests extending far and wide, one could also imagine him having been the proprietor of the land which was "sold" to the house-owners. Also, being no doubt a thoughtful and far-sighted individual, one could imagine him deciding to have constructed a specially-built underground bomb-proof and gas-proof shelter, and utilising the services of the house-owners for the designing and construction of this necessary refuge at a time when the conflicting "idealisms" of capitalist powers leads them into armed conflict. In such an event, one could also imagine the house-owners sallying forth to do armed battle with a dastardly enemy, while the gentleman contributed handsomely towards the cost of a temporary hospital bearing his name, and descended discreetly into his shelter when bombers are about. Returning from the fray, the gallant fighters (those who do return) may have to face a period of compulsory retirement from industry, due to an "economic blizzard," and may be under the unfortunate necessity of surrendering their houses to the building society. Let them not worry, however; a kindly Government has placed at their disposal a Board of Public Assistance, who will be only too glad to enquire into their means and to ensure that they should not starve.

Whence arise these discrepancies? Why do workers, having built houses and mansions, not

live in them without the fear of being expelled? Why, having produced an abundance of useful things, so that the world's storehouses are filled to overflowing, are they compelled to queue up before officious bureaucrats in order to be allowed a pitiful subsistence—a mere fleabite out of the enormous wealth they have produced?

The answer is to be found in the fact of the private ownership of the means of production and the consequent existence of a separate owning class. Ownership means control, and so the capitalists, as we will now call them, are able, within limits, to decide what goods shall be produced, and when. Being natural human beings, however, they do not love production for its own sake, but only for the wealth and the comfort it brings them. Hence we see that, when the periodic crisis comes along, the workers are dismissed and thrown on the scrap-heap. This system, however, has so far satisfied the workers that, while they have grumbled at its effects, they have consciously or unconsciously supported the system itself. The workers, however, form the overwhelming majority of the population, and provided they adopt the right tactics, nothing can stop their acquiring for themselves the complete ownership and control of the means of production. The capitalists, however, realising the precariousness of their position, are not too scrupulous in their methods to conserve it, and, controlling the armed forces, are prepared to use them against the workers if they deem it advisable. There is only one method of gaining control of those armed forces, and that is by using the weapon which the masters have placed in their hands, i.e., the democratic machinery of Parliament.

Those who accept the correctness of the Socialist position will not fail to give the necessary financial and other support. **RAMO.**

## War and the Working-Class

**Do you know why modern wars occur?**

**Do you know what is the Socialist attitude towards war?**

**Do you know that the S.P.G.B. was the only political organisation in Great Britain which proclaimed its Socialist opposition to the Great War immediately it broke out and kept to that attitude throughout the War?**

**Do you know what attitude you as a worker should take up towards war?**

For answers to these and other questions read **"WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS."**

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## Meetings, Lectures, etc.

### ISLINGTON BRANCH

Indoor Lectures. Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m. Co-op. Hall, Room 1; 129 Seven Sisters Road, Islington, N.  
 Nov. 4 "Is Britain Going Fascist?" - A. TONY  
 11 "American Political Situation" - M. BARITZ  
 18 "Dictatorship, Democracy and Socialism" - N. NESBIT  
 25 "Socialism and the Intellectuals" - A. KILNER  
 Questions and discussions. All invited. Admission free.

### LEWISHAM

HISTORY AND ECONOMICS CLASSES  
 will be held on alternate Thursdays at "Anchor" Club Room, Lewisham Road, at 8.45 p.m.  
 Nov. 5 "Economics" - WILMOTT  
 12 "History" - REGINALD  
 19 "Economics" - WILMOTT  
 26 "Imperialism" (History) - REGINALD  
 Dec. 3 "Economics" - WILMOTT

### BATTERSEA

A Lecture will be given on Thursday, November 19th, at 8.30 p.m. at Latchmere Baths (Burns Rd. entrance)  
 "Socialism and Fascism."  
 E. HARDY.  
 All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### STEPNEY

An Economics Class will be held in the Small Committee Room at the WHITECHAPEL LIBRARY, Whitechapel High Street, E. (Aldgate East, Underground Station), on every Thursday evening during the winter, commencing on Thursday, October 29th.  
 Tutor - Com. GOLDSTEIN

### HACKNEY

Meetings are held on Fridays at 8.30 p.m. at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, Hackney.  
 Nov. 13. "Is Force the Road to Power?" - A. REGINALD  
 20. "The International Situation" - C. LESTER  
 27. "The Materialist Conception of History" - R. ROBERTUS  
 All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday at 8.30 p.m. at the A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, (corner of Guildford Street), W.C.1.  
 Nov. 2 "Present Situation in Spain" - E. WILMOTT  
 (Open Discussion)  
 9 "Subject to be announced"  
 16 "Subject to be announced"  
 23 "Socialism and Anarchism" - A. KOHN  
 30 "Will France go Fascist?" - G. CLIFFORD  
 All invited. Questions and Discussion. Admission free.

### LEYTON INDOOR LECTURES

at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, on Sunday evenings at 7.30 p.m.  
 Nov. 1 "The Menace of the War" - WILLMOTT  
 8 "Socialism and Fascism" - HARDY  
 15 Marx, Lenin and Trotsky - CASH  
 22 "The Popular Front in France" - CLIFFORD  
 29 "Socialism and Religion" - LESTOR  
 All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### SOUTHEND

Meetings are being held on Wednesday evenings, at 8.15 p.m., at 6 Market Place, Victoria Circus.  
 Nov. 4. "Spain" - L. OTWAY  
 18. "Socialism the Enemy of Dictators" - ROBERTUS  
 All invited. Admission free. Questions and Discussion.

### MANCHESTER

Meetings are held every Sunday evening at 8 p.m., at King's Café, Oxford Street (near All Saints Church).  
 Nov. 15 "Can the Popular Front Prevent Fascism?" - G. CLIFFORD  
 22 "Is Labour Marching to War?" - E. WILMOTT  
 29 "Marxism and Terrorism" - R. ROBERTUS  
 All invited. Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.  
 (No meetings on 1st and 8th November)

### LEICESTER

Under auspices of the Leicester Secular Society, at the Secular Hall, Humberston Gate, Leicester, on Sunday, Dec. 13th, at 6.30 p.m.  
 A LECTURE will be given by A. KOHN.  
 Subject:  
 "Can We Stop War To-day?"

### NOTTINGHAM

Under the auspices of the Cosmo Debating Society. The University Lecture Hall, Shakespeare Street.  
 Sunday, Nov. 15th at 2.30 p.m.  
 A LECTURE—"Marxism and Terrorism."  
 Speaker: R. ROBERTUS.  
 Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturdays in each month.  
 Nov. 7, 3 p.m. Imperial War Museum (St. George Road, near Lambeth North Stn).  
 "Armaments and Industry" - LESTOR  
 Nov. 21, 2 p.m. Home Office Industrial Museum H. RUSSELL  
 (97 Horseferry Road, W.1; No. 10 Buses pass the door).  
 Dec. 5, 3 p.m. South Kensington Science Museum.  
 "Transport, Past and Present" - H. RUSSELL  
 Comrade Reginald emphasised throughout the visit to the London Museum on 3rd October, that the object of these visits was not merely to give information, but to provide clues which could be enlarged upon later.  
 A small but interested party accompanied Comrade Lestor at the Greenwich Naval Museum on 17th October.

### GLASGOW

### DEBATE WITH GUY ALDRED

A Debate will take place on Friday, November 6th, at 8 p.m.  
 CLARION SCOUTS' HALL,  
 North Portland Street, (off George Street).  
 Subject:  
 "Which Policy should the Working Class support, that of the S.P.G.B. or Anarchism?"  
 For the S.P.G.B.—J. HIGGINS. For Anarchism—GUY ALDRED  
 Doors open 7.30 p.m. Admission free



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

NOVEMBER,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money and Postal Orders and Cheques should be made payable. Postal Orders and Cheques should be crossed.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The First Air-Raiders

**L**ORD LONDONDERRY, the Minister for Air, speaking in the House of Lords on May 22nd, 1935, declared that at the 1932 Disarmament Conference, when total abolition of air forces, or at least of bombing planes, was discussed, he "had the utmost difficulty . . . amid the public outcry, in preserving the use of the bombing aeroplane even on the frontiers of the Middle East and India" (quoted by Dr. Dalton, M.P., House of Commons, March 9th, 1936. See Hansard, March 9th, column 1922).

Lord Londonderry, in a letter to *The Times* (December 30th, 1935), has explained that his statement did not mean what at first sight it appears to mean. His explanation was that an international Convention to abolish bombing from the air would be of no value unless it was possible at the same time so to control civil aviation as to make it impossible to convert civil aircraft into bombing planes—in other words that the capitalist States do not for one moment accept each other's pledges as of any account—and, consequently, that it was his duty as Air Minister to take the long view and maintain an efficient air force "with its necessary bombing strength."

It must be said that Lord Londonderry's letter does not put him in any better light, for the fact remains that dropping bombs on almost defenceless frontier tribes is a fiendish act, whether ordered by a Mussolini, a Lord Londonderry or by the two Labour Governments we have had in this country, and which maintained the doctrine of "continuity" in this matter of bombing.

Those who face the future with fear because of the possibility that an outbreak of war may see foreign bombers destroying the city in which they happen to live should not forget that successive Governments have tolerated the bombing of native tribesmen.

Another thing they should remember is that it was the British, not the Germans, who started the whole business of air-raiding. At least, that was the boast made by an official body in 1917. The following notes are extracts from a lantern lecture entitled "War in the Air," issued by the National War Savings Committee and being shown during the year 1917.

Slide 32.—"The Navy's land machines went over to Belgium, and it is to the credit of the R.N.A.S. that the first hostile missiles which fell on German soil were bombs dropped by the R.N.A.S. at Cologne and Dusseldorf."

Slide 34.—". . . Unfortunately the German advance in Belgium drove our bases so far back it became impossible to reach German towns with the aeroplanes then available."

Slide 35.—". . . It is interesting to note that these early raids by the R.N.A.S. were the first example of bomb-dropping attacks in any war. . . ." (our italics).

If true, these statements give patriotic Britishers something else to be proud of. We say "if true" because, although given on official authority, cold calculated lying from official quarters was so boundless and impudent during the War that this may just possibly be another example of the latter military art.

When Heinrich Heine wrote nearly a century ago "It is printed, then it is untrue," he might well have been describing any Government Department in any country in time of war.

### This Month's Quotation.

The quotation in the panel on the front page is taken from "Value, Price and Profit," by K. Marx.

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### Answers to Correspondents.

Owing to pressure on space several answers to correspondents have been held over. They will appear in a later issue. ED. COMM.

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### Economics.

In response to demand voiced at the recent meeting called to discuss educational activities, an Economics class will be held at Head Office every Sunday at 3.30 p.m. Admission free.

## The Labour Party Conference

**T**HE Labour Party held its thirty-sixth Annual Conference at Edinburgh in October, under a woman Chairman, Mrs. Adamson. The usual complacency which characterises Labour conferences was there, though somewhat shaken by internal criticism. The debate on supporting the National Government's policy of non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War provided one example among many of deep differences inside the Labour Party. A resolution before the Conference asked for endorsement of the Executive's policy of non-intervention. Leaders supported the resolution and leaders opposed it; even members of the Executive, who were responsible for framing it, were unenthusiastic about it. All who spoke expressed their sympathy for the Spanish Government, but non-intervention was regarded as a stern duty. To supply the Spanish Government with arms, it was argued, would divide the nations of Europe into two camps, those supporting the Government and those supporting the rebels. Such a position would be dangerous and likely to lead to a European war. No speaker expressed any doubt that intervention had taken place, and that Italy and Germany had broken the neutrality agreement entered into with the governments of Great Britain, France and Russia, and had sent arms to the rebels. So the fear of war was responsible for the Executive's decision. "It is no good talking about intervention unless you mean

that you are ready to fight, and it may mean having to fight," said Mr. Grenfell, M.P., who seconded the resolution on behalf of the Executive.

About the help given to the rebels there was no doubt in the minds of the delegates. The Chairman, in her opening address, said: "Unquestionably, the rebel forces have been assisted by the supplies they have received from and through the Fascist powers." However, non-intervention was the order of the day, and a card vote resulted in the resolution being carried by 1,836,000 to 519,000. (*Daily Herald*, October 6th.)

### Conference Supports, then Opposes, Non-Intervention

Having made the decision that non-intervention was preferable to the risk of war, Conference, in a few days, completely changed its mind. On Thursday, October 8th, two envoys of the Spanish Government appeared on the platform, Senor de Asua, Deputy Speaker of the Spanish Parliament, and Senora de Palencia, Madrid correspondent of the *Daily Herald*. They received a tumultuous welcome. Addressing the delegates, Senor de Asua said: "We have proof and facts that the rebels are getting arms from Germany and Italy—and that is since the non-intervention pact was made." He further declared that the Balearic Islands were virtually in the hands of Italy, that Italians commanded rebel troops in Majorca, and that rebel warships had Germans among the crews.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

was made." He further declared that the Balearic Islands were virtually in the hands of Italy, that Italians commanded rebel troops in Majorca, and that rebel warships had Germans among the crews.



Senora de Palencia gave a harrowing account of Government militiamen in the firing-line, armed only with sticks. Of the Moors, who are fighting with the rebels, she also said: "If they take a town or a village, not a woman is respected, not a church is respected." Conference was swept off its feet. Mr. Attlee and Mr. Greenwood were sent to London to interview Mr. Chamberlain, the Deputy Prime Minister, to acquaint him with the "evidence" that the non-intervention pact had been broken by Italy and Germany. The result of the interview was reported to the Conference on the last day of its sitting. Mr. Attlee submitted a long statement, which declared that:—

"The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, having heard the report of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, together with further documented information that has been placed before it, emphatically declares its conviction that the Fascist powers have broken their pledges of non-intervention, and endorses the demand made by our leaders, that the investigation of the alleged breaches of the Spanish non-intervention agreement should be pressed forward with the utmost speed . . . and in the event of its being found that the agreement has been ineffective . . . the French and British Governments . . . should take steps forthwith to restore to the Spanish Government its right to purchase the arms necessary to maintain the authority of the constitutional Government in Spain. . . ." (*Daily Herald*, October 11th, 1936.)

Mr. Chamberlain had promised the investigation demanded, so Conference accepted the statement of the National Executive unanimously. The change of mind was amazing. A few days earlier the policy of non-intervention had been endorsed because of the fear that war would result from intervention. Logically the change of mind could only be justified if this fear had proved to be groundless. The opposite was the case; Conference was warned by the leaders of the "risks involved" in the change of policy.

What exactly the Labour Party expected to get by asking for investigation, it is difficult to discover. The British Government is doubtless quite well aware what has been going on, and if there have been violations of the non-intervention agreement, then, as Lord Strabolgi pointed out, the Government's advisers will know all about it without being told by the Labour Party. Moreover, as the British Government has decided that non-intervention is in line with capitalist interests, then they will doubtless postpone investigations until such time as the facts, being disclosed officially, will no longer embarrass them. The newspapers generally reported that the second decision, to support intervention if investigations showed the allegations against Italy and Germany to be true, put delegates in a much happier mood than the

earlier decision. That cannot be doubted. It is not the first time that the odd mixture of political adventurers, sentimentalists, lawyers, and happy but ignorant trade union officials, which make up the Labour Party, has salved its conscience by such a gesture. The foreign policy of the Labour Party has usually been tied to the tail of the Government which happened to be in power, and its Spanish policy has been in line with that tradition. The decision to adopt a "dangerous" policy when there is no longer any danger in it, and when it is useless to the Madrid Government it pretends to help, is typical of political hypocrisy, as rife in the Labour Party as anywhere. Russia has fallen into line with same policy of proposing to help when the time for help has passed.

#### The Labour Party and Armaments

Conference turned its attention to armaments. The following is part of a resolution moved by Mr. Hugh Dalton on behalf of the Executive:—

That in view of the threatening attitude of dictatorships, which are increasing their armaments at an unprecedented rate, flouting international law, and refusing to co-operate in the work of organising peace, this Conference declares that the armed strength of the countries loyal to the League of Nations must be conditioned by the armed strength of the potential aggressors.

The Conference therefore reaffirms the policy of the Labour Party to maintain such defence forces as are consistent with our country's responsibility as a member of the League of Nations, the preservation of the people's rights and liberties, the continuance of democratic institutions, and the observance of international law.—(*Daily Herald*, October 7th, 1936.)

Lord Arnold, who was opposed to the resolution, described it as a "masterpiece of inconsistencies, ambiguities and contradictions. . . . France did not care twopence about the League, except insofar as her own interests were concerned. . . . France had been breaking pledges year after year . . . but . . . continued to pay lip service to the League." He claimed that "the resolution meant rearmament, to which Conference was asked to agree in the name of Collective Security, and because of the menace of Fascism, but after the next war there would only be another 'ism,' new horrors and new dictatorships. . . . Another war would never settle anything."

Mr. Lansbury opposed the resolution because he did not know what it meant. The mover, he argued, had inferred that it meant that the Labour Party would support the Government's policy of rearmament in Parliament, whilst the seconder had implied the opposite. Mr. Dalton, who moved the resolution, had said:—

"I judge that a Labour Government, if it came to power to-morrow, would have to face the world situation, and I contend it would be compelled to increase British armaments." (*Daily Herald*, October 7th, 1936.)

Mr. A. Henderson, who seconded, said he was a "confirmed believer in the collective peace system . . . the past failures of the League of

Nations were not due to the failure of the peace systems but to failure to apply it." He mentioned nothing about rearmament. Moreover, he omitted to explain why the failure to apply the peace system was not due to the failure of the League of Nations. Mr. Morrison, supporting the resolution, stated a viewpoint the direct opposite of Mr. Dalton's. He said "it did not mean the support of the Government's national competitive rearmament programme," and that "it was in no way a departure from the policy which this Party had approved for years past." If that were true it would be difficult to explain why delegates had spent all day airing their disagreements about it. Moreover, Mr. Morrison's further statement of opinion, that "the totality of armaments of all the peace States, joined together for the positive organisation of peace, must bear relationship to the totality of the arms of the potential aggressors," is about as clear as the resolution he was supporting. Mr. Morrison is known for his forthright and expressive language, but that statement compares unfavourably with many made by that genius in vacuous phrases, the late and derided leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. Who are the peace States? Who the potential aggressors? Who is going to decide? What capitalist dictatorship or democracy is there that does not proclaim its peaceful intentions? Perhaps Mr. Morrison will deal with the question some time. Brought down to reality and penetrating the vagueness (perhaps intentional), the statement points to pacts in preparation for a future war.

Mr. Attlee, in winding up the discussion on the resolution, was almost insulting to the intelligence of the delegates. He said there was "nothing in the resolution which bound the Parliamentary Labour Party." Thus, after a day's discussion on a resolution which was carried by 1,738,000 votes to 657,000, the resolution was interpreted by the leaders of the Party as meaning (1) support for rearmament, (2) support for the League and Collective Security (Mr. Henderson), (3) the Status Quo (Mr. Morrison), (4) nothing (Mr. Lansbury), and (5) that it was non-committal and gave a free hand to the Parliamentary Labour Party to do what they liked about it (Mr. Attlee). Three cheers for leadership would have completed the irony of that resolution. What is astounding is that a Party which accepts "the risk of War" should be evasive about supporting a policy which provides arms to fight war.

The debate was enlivened by some acrimonious exchanges between the leaders. Mr. Bevin accused Mr. Morrison of the "worst piece of tightrope walking" he had ever seen at a conference, and Lord Arnold expressed the hope that, in the event of war, "Mr. Noel Baker and the trade union leaders would make for the front line trenches."

#### Communist Affiliation Turned Down

The resolution supporting Communist Party affiliation to the Labour Party was defeated by 1,728,000 votes to 592,000. (*Daily Herald*, October 9th, 1936.) Another, which asked for a "united front of all political bodies which are engaged in working-class propaganda, was defeated by 1,805,000 votes to 435,000. (*Daily Herald*, October 10th, 1936.)

Reference back of that part of the Executive's report to Conference, which had declined to put a ban on the acceptance of honours, was carried by 185 votes to 174. This result was received with acclamation. A minor victory for the rank and file, but it is doubtful whether Labour M.P.s and trade union officials will be absent from the honours lists in the future.

Strangely, or perhaps significantly, there was an absence this year of resolutions recommending the nationalisation of this or that industry. What reformist proposals were dealt with were of a minor kind and limited to such proposals as the utilisation of the surplus in the unemployment insurance funds to increase benefits, the abolition of the six-day waiting period for unemployed men and women, the "rejuvenation" of depressed areas "by schemes of land reclamation and prevention of coast erosion." The absence of important issues, apart from those on foreign affairs, was reflected in a petty row on a small matter between Mrs. Gould and Miss Ellen Wilkinson. The latter wanted the Executive to lead the Communist-inspired unemployed march from the depressed areas around Newcastle to London. Mrs. Gould suggested that Miss Wilkinson's oratory, plus propaganda films, would be more suitable to draw public attention to the misery in the depressed area. Charges of lack of feeling for the unemployed were made by Miss Wilkinson, because Mrs. Gould did not agree with her.

#### Labour League of Youth in Trouble

The Executive's recommendations regarding the Labour League of Youth were adopted unanimously. The main recommendations were:—

- (a) Disband the National Advisory Committee of the League;
- (b) Not convene the Conference of the League next Easter;
- (c) Suspend the publication of the *New Nation*, the journal of the League; and
- (d) Age limit to be 21 instead of 25.

The League had made things awkward in wanting to take part in discussing and shaping Party policy. That has been stopped. If the League appears again it will be more in the nature of a Boy Scouts organisation.

#### Opposition to Trade Union Dominance

According to reports from Labour quarters, this year's Conference was the worst in years.



There was much dissatisfaction among delegates, particularly those representing the local constituency Labour Parties. One matter in particular, according to *Forward* (October 7th), caused critical comment: that was the way in which the trade unions, by means of the block vote, can obtain an overwhelming decision even when the majority of delegates from the constituency Labour Parties are opposed to the decision. The block vote means that trades unions affiliated to the Labour Party can vote to the full strength of their members who pay the political levy to the Labour Party. An enormous number of these are not otherwise members of the Party. The Labour League of Youth question was a typical example of the way in which the block vote operated. This was purely a domestic question concerning the Labour Party, and yet, despite the fact that a majority of the constituency party delegates were in favour of a resolution to retain the age for membership of the League of Youth at 25, it was defeated by 1,731,000 votes to 542,000. A meeting of 250 angry constituency delegates was held under the chairmanship of Sir Stafford Cripps after the Conference had closed. The result was that a committee was set up to go into the question of the relationship of the trades unions and the Labour Party. As a result, the Executive Committee will be presented with demands for a number of reforms. The chief demands will be:—

(1) That the election of the constituency party representatives be made only by delegates of the constituency parties.

(2) An alteration in the present basis of representation which would give constituency parties a greater voice in party matters at annual conferences.

(3) That there should be a variation of the present method of card voting.—*Forward*, October 17th, 1936.)

Strange that the demand for democracy should be heard in the Labour Party in the 36th year of its existence!

It may be that the Labour Party has passed the peak of its strength, that it will never again be the Government except in coalition with the Liberals or some other capitalist group. The uncertainty and lack of confidence among the leaders at Edinburgh certainly seemed to indicate that they were conscious of this. That arrogant self-assurance in themselves as the saviours of mankind, which characterised conferences in the days before there was the least chance of them becoming the Government, is now completely absent. Each succeeding annual conference exposes more clearly the non-Socialist character of the Labour Party. The result is discontent among numbers of its members, who, because of their lack of understanding, had expected something quite different from the Labour Party when it grew to strength and influence.

The harm the Labour Party has done to the cause of Socialism can only be cleared up by Socialist understanding. That is the task of the Socialist Party.

H. W.

## Mr. D. N. Pritt and the Russian Trial

MR. PRITT has written a pamphlet entitled "The Zinoviev Trial." The purpose of this pamphlet is to refute allegations that the Russian terrorist trial was not conducted fairly and urging that the sixteen executed were, in fact, guilty of the charges. In other words, it is Mr. Pritt's contention that the trial was not in any sense a frame-up.

We do not share Mr. Pritt's view, and there is nothing in his pamphlet that gives us sound reasons for doing so. On the first page he tells us he has studied the *whole* of the available material and has the advantage of professional training and he feels forgiving towards critics who have had to rely on the *very condensed* reports that have reached this country. He also adds that he was present at the trial. If by condensed reports Mr. Pritt signifies those like the Russian official report that has been issued, then we would point out that Mr. Pritt's pamphlet adds nothing to our information on the subject.

We will take some of Mr. Pritt's points and examine them as examples of the nature of his defence.

First of all he deals with the abjectness and eagerness of the confessions of Zinoviev and his associates. At the beginning he attempts to explain them on the ground of race. He argues that to us the confessions make curious reading only because we don't do those things. This is surely a curious argument and can just as well be used to defend any enormities committed by the Russian Government itself.

He informs us that his friends in Russia tell him that it is common for prisoners there to plead guilty when the evidence is overwhelming against them, and he adds:—

I am bound to say, as some confirmation of this assertion, that in conversations I have held in Soviet prisons with accused persons awaiting trial on substantial charges, I have not infrequently been struck by the readiness with which they have stated to me, *in the presence of warders*, that they are guilty and cannot complain if they are punished. (Page 6.) (Italics ours.)

The above statement in itself is sufficient to put out of court all Mr. Pritt's psychological arguments (in spite of his professional training), and he evidently has no idea of what people will do when in fear. The suggestion is that prisoners are terrorised into making confessions and he replies that they confessed to him—in the presence of warders! What did he expect them to do?

There is a further point to be noted in Mr. Pritt's statement. Why were warders present when he interviewed prisoners—was it that they could not trust him or them? Perhaps they were afraid the prisoners might not have confessed if left alone with Mr. Pritt! It would be interesting to know

if any foreign journalist or Mr. Pritt had any *private* interviews with any of the Zinoviev group before or during the trial. And, if not, why not?

In reply to the criticism of the private nature of the preliminary investigations, Mr. Pritt points out that the same procedure is adopted in many European countries. Either he overlooks or does not understand the meaning of his statement on page 2 that Russia is a Socialist country. If this statement were true then Russian procedure should be ahead of the most democratic capitalist countries instead of being behind many of them.

Explaining the paucity of the evidence brought forward at the trial Mr. Pritt argues that as the prisoners pleaded guilty it was only necessary to decide upon the degree of their guilt and, hence, only evidence in this direction was considered. We have already dealt with this point in last month's *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, and we only mention it here to bring in the following quotation from the pamphlet:—

One can well imagine that the Soviet Government, so far as concerns the point of view of properly informing foreign criticism, would much have preferred that all or most of the accused should have pleaded not guilty and contested the case. (Page 9.)

This is an excellent example of Mr. Pritt's reasoning. May we ask him what prevented the Soviet Government from giving the evidence in full for the benefit of foreign criticism? Surely it is not suggested that the prisoners would have objected! Either the statement is a meaningless piece of bluff or else there were serious reasons preventing the bringing forward of the alleged evidence.

On page 10 we have another example of legal reasoning that is a jewel.

To give an example, it was part of the prosecution's case that two of the accused had had a conversation in which a highly incriminating phrase was used; the two accused in question, by no means friendly to one another, each admitted that such a conversation had taken place and that the incriminating words were used, but each of them said that the other was the actual author of the phrase. It does not require much experience in the weighing of evidence to realise that such a circumstance as that offers considerable evidence of the guilt, and considerable reinforcement to the plea of guilty, of either or both of the accused in question.

Surely the conclusion is absurd. Why did the accused admit that a conversation had taken place which only themselves knew about? (What was the "weight of evidence" that forced this confession?) If the case was framed what better way to make it appear genuine than to introduce trumpery disagreements that did not affect the main charge? If they each said the other used the incriminating words then either or both may be liars. As the accused were alleged to have examined the evidence before the case opened they all knew what was coming forward at the trial. Finally, if it is not known who used the incriminating phrase it is no evidence of the guilt of either.

Yet another example of Mr. Pritt's reasoning

powers is contained in the following two quotations. It will be noticed that in the first quotation he asserts that it would be impossible to procure a confession from, or to trick into confessing, men of the calibre of the defendants. In the second quotation he says it would be easy to do so!

If it were the practice of the People's Commissariat for Home Affairs, which has taken over the staff and the functions of the G.P.U., to extract confessions by false promises of lenient treatment... surely no one would be better able to estimate the complete worthlessness of such a promise under the circumstances of this case than the experienced revolutionaries whom I saw in the dock. If, again, it were the practice of this department to attempt to extract confessions by violence... no one would be better able than these men to support the violence, and subsequently to expose it before the world in the sure hope of discrediting their enemies and gaining sympathy for themselves. If any trickery or deceit, simple or complicated, were employed in an effort to entrap any of these men into confession, surely they would be better fitted than anyone else on earth to detect and circumvent the plot. (Page 12.)

Such men as the critics suggest that Stalin is, would not have hesitated for a moment; they would have procured a confession, a simple enough task. It only involved a promise of leniency; or some simple trick like telling each of them that the other has confessed. (Page 18.)

In the first quotation it is stated that no one would be better able to withstand violence than the accused. This may be true, but there are forms of torture well known to the Bolsheviks (such as what is called the Chinese and the Ukrainian) which it is doubtful whether anyone could withstand. The threat of the continuance of either would make the present writer confess anything and yearn for the shooting party. Further, if the violence is sufficiently effective to extract a confession, then it is almost certain that the threat of its continuance would be enough to deter any attempts at exposure. Anyhow, to whom would the exposure be made? There were only some foreign journalists, some young Communists and safe Government supporters present at the trial. As Mr. Pritt does not say anything about having interviewed the prisoners we take it that this was not possible. If it was possible, and he did not attempt to interview them, then he is wrong when he says he examined all the available evidence. Mr. Pritt is evidently quite blind to the influence of violence and hence makes such statements as the following:—

Why are we not to assume, of such men as these, that if they said nothing against the Government and against the investigators, and nothing in favour of themselves, it was because there was nothing to be said? (Page 16.)

It is just because they said nothing against the Government, and so forth, that the business points strongly to a frame-up. There are people who, on Mr. Pritt's own admission, held to their policy to the last, and were only forced at the very end to admit complicity in a terrorist attack on officials of a Government they were denouncing. As they had confessed two or three times before,



they could hardly be considered "of contrite heart," and yet they give fulsome praise to the opponents who, they know, are going to shoot them! It will take more than Mr. Pritt's simple views on racial differences to explain that.

On page 17, Mr. Pritt asks indignantly, referring to this "Socialist" country:—

Is it part of the duty of the judicial authorities to publish reports showing exactly how they have conducted preliminary investigations of which the persons who are at once most interested and best informed, viz., the accused, make no complaint?

But why not publish such reports? Particularly when there is so much suspicion. Further, may we ask if Mr. Pritt knows anything about the methods employed in getting confessions? It is surely a strange thing that there are so many abject confessions, so much purging in Russia, and that when it is suggested that Bukharin, Rakovsky and Radek were implicated, that all of them should so anxiously have screamed for the death penalty on the prisoners. What develops this fearful apprehension in men who were not afraid of methods of the Czarist police? On page 20, Mr. Pritt says that the confessions were the prudent course of clear-headed men. Where does the prudence lie in clearing the path to the grave?

On page 24, Mr. Pritt speaks of the "genuinely corroborative evidence which . . . can be deduced from the indictment and from such evidence as was brought into court." Why does he not give us some of it? If the arguments in the pamphlet are intended as such then they do nothing to clear the air.

Referring to a suggestion that a lawyer sometimes might not "pull his weight" for an accused out of fear of the Government, Mr. Pritt writes as follows:—

Whether there is anything in it in the U.S.S.R. or not is, of course, not easy to say; all that I can contribute to its elucidation is that I investigated it with care four years ago, and came to the conclusion that a political defendant had as good a chance of getting reliable counsel in the U.S.S.R., as anywhere else. . . . *I may, of course, have been wrong, although I do not think I was.* (Page 32.) (Italics ours.)

Again, this is supposed to be a "Socialist" country, and they stood, at best, no better chance—but he is not sure—he only thinks so!

He also adds that he does not know where in the world a counsel could be found with a command over Russian sufficient to follow such a fast trial full of cross-questioning, etc. Yet, in spite of the difficulties and speed of the trial, Mr. Pritt, who is not a Russian scholar, claims to have been able to follow it closely enough to be convinced of its genuineness!

Towards the end of the pamphlet he makes some remarks on the Russian judicial system, designed to suggest that prisoners have as much chance in a Soviet court as elsewhere:—

The independence of judges and advocates is being constantly increased, and already compares favourably with that prevailing in many European countries. (Page 29-30.) (Italics ours.)

This statement is significant in a sense not intended. Does it mean that *now* the position compares favourably with, say, Italy, Germany, Poland and Austria?

Every foreign critic who has studied the Soviet legal system has reported that, taken as a whole, it is good and fair; everyone who studies it at all knows that year by year it progresses steadily towards greater facilities for the prisoner, greater independence of judges and counsel, and greater technical efficiency. (Page 30.)

Now let us compare the above with the remarks on the same subject of one who spent years in Russia, wrote considerably about it when there, and was always regarded as a sympathetic observer. The remarks are contained in an article entitled, "Paradise Imagined," by W. H. Chamberlin, published in *The American Mercury* for September, 1936. The quotation is a long one, but we think is too interesting to cut:—

But no sketch of the position of the Soviet lawyer is remotely adequate if it fails to show that he is definitely inhibited from performing one of his most useful and honourable functions; the protection of the individual against the injustice of the State. In democratic countries, even in Czarist Russia, lawyers have always been able to undertake this duty.

It would be impossible to point to a single case in recent years in the Soviet Union where a lawyer has offered an outspoken, vigorous defence of a political prisoner. Yet this is not because evidence of grotesque injustice has been lacking. One need only recall the Ramzin sabotage trial of 1930, when two men, Ryabushinsky and Vishnegradsky, were solemnly indicted for conspiring to set up a counter-revolutionary government in Russia years after they had been dead and buried. The outside world roared with laughter when it learned of this illuminating slip. But neither the attorneys for the defence in the farcical trial nor anyone else in the Soviet Courtroom saw fit to mention it.

But it would be simply unthinkable for a Soviet lawyer, assigned to "defend" a political prisoner, to emphasise damaging weaknesses in the prosecution's case, or to publish in a legal journal a vigorous denunciation of the frequent practice of arbitrary arrest and exile without trial. The immense force for individual security and common decency, the vast bulwark against personal spite and bureaucratic tyranny, represented by an independent judiciary and by lawyers who can put forth their best efforts on behalf of political defendants without fear of being sent to concentration camps, simply do not exist in the Soviet Union. (Page 11.)

This is a far different picture from that presented by Mr. Pritt!

Mr. Pritt claims to have studied all the available evidence, to have been present at the trial, and to be peculiarly fitted by legal training to understand this case, and yet, on page 19, when going over the previous history of the accused, he only mentions one previous occasion on which they were concerned in a terrorist trial. On page 1138 of the official report of the trial, Kameneff is reported as saying:—

I am now before the court for the third time, accused of terrorist intentions. (Final statement.)

Why has Mr. Pritt failed to mention this third trial? A letter appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of October 7th, which gives us some

information on this point. The writer is Anton Ciliga, at one time a member of the Politburo, who left Russia at the end of last year. The following extract from his letter deals with the matter in question:—

Nor was there any mention of a trial which took place between that of the murderer of Kiroff and the recent Moscow trial, at the beginning of the summer of 1935. Not a word about this trial had been allowed, at the time, to appear in the Soviet Press. The charge was of attempted assassination of Stalin; Zinovieff and Kameneff were among the defendants. The case ended with the shooting of two of the defendants, a G.P.U. official and an officer of the Kremlin guard; 36 men were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. Kameneff's term was prolonged to five years, Zinovieff was acquitted. This whole affair was also left entirely unmentioned in the recent trial. The only indirect reference to it—Kameneff's statement that he was appearing for the third time, in a proletarian court of justice, on a charge of terrorism—was carefully cut out of the foreign Communist reports.

There is still a host of questionable statements and frail reasoning in Mr. Pritt's pamphlet, but what we have dealt with should be sufficient to give the reader an idea of the weakness of Mr. Pritt's case.

GILMAC.

### "A WORLD TO WIN!"

Ye Lords of Wealth, who hold in thrall

The workers of all lands,

Shall with your ruthless system fall

When *Power* lies in our hands!

For paltry wage your wealth we pile,

Your useless class we keep:—

We'll raze your robber-system vile,

And we who've sown shall reap!

Lords of the wealth that *we* have made—

Lords o'er our very life—

Think you *our* purpose shall be stayed?

Ye germs of bloody strife!

Tho' race slay race at your vile call

When lust of gold and power

And "Profit" is your all-in-all . . .

Yet will we make you cower!

The day will dawn when we, who make

The wealth of every land,

Combined in *all our power*, will take

Control from out your hand:

Wage-slaves *not then* in time of "peace,"

Nor pawns to win your wars!

Your tyrant's might for e'er shall cease:

We'll triumph in Our Cause!

Fulness of life (not slavery!)

With joy and peace for aye,

Shall bloom for us, as liberty

Turns man's long night to day!!

J. G. M.

### NOTICE TO NEW READERS

If you are reading THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for the first time and would like further information about the S.P.G.B., write to the General Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1.

### THE S.P.G.B. AND TROTSKY

E. P. (Bradford).—The articles on the Russian trial do not indicate that the S.P.G.B. supports Trotsky or shares his point of view. We thought this was made clear in the articles. On many occasions during the past 18 years we have indicated our disagreement with the Russian Communists, including the Trotsky faction. Trotsky is as much at fault as Lenin and Stalin in believing that violence and dictatorship are justified or can make up for backward industrial development in Russia or the smallness of the Socialist movements everywhere.

The existence of discontent in Russia is not due to agitation by Trotskyites or anyone else, but to disappointment with conditions (the low standard of living, inequality of wages, etc.) and with Government policy at home and abroad. Although the active discontent may be relatively small, and not united, the Stalin Government evidently fears lest the various discontented groups come together, especially in the elections due shortly under the new constitution.

ED. COMM.

### SOCIALISTS AND THE CROWN

An anonymous correspondent refers us to an article in *The Daily Telegraph* (October 19th), supporting the view that a "snatched victory at the polls" would be utterly useless for the purpose of achieving Socialism, because the whole of the forces of capitalism, including the Crown, would successfully repel any such bluff. The S.P.G.B. has of course always held that view as against Labourites and Communists. We are obliged to our correspondent.

ED. COMM.

### HOW YOU CAN DO A SPOT OF WORK FOR SOCIALISM

The majority of the libraries in the big towns now show a copy of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. We would like to get THE SOCIALIST STANDARD on show in every library in the land. Our Libraries Committee will co-operate with you in bringing this about, but it falls on you, as a local resident, to take the initiative.

Write to the chief librarian of your own public library and ask why THE SOCIALIST STANDARD is not on show. Get your friends to write. Inform our Libraries Committee that you are doing this, and they will reinforce your enquiry by writing a letter from Head Office enclosing a specimen copy of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

An interesting fact which you can mention in your letter is that the New York State Public Library recently acquired a complete set of SOCIALIST STANDARD'S, right back to the first issue.



Libraries naturally vary in their methods of acquiring literature, but you can say that THE SOCIALIST STANDARD can be obtained through W. H. Smith & Son, or by subscription direct, or the Socialist Party of Great Britain will keep the library supplied free of charge.

The most effective method of getting THE SOCIALIST STANDARD on show is by pressure from local residents, either by interviewing or by letter, but letters are the most effective, because they can be retained and submitted by the librarian to the local libraries committee. If you do not know exactly how to frame your letter, write to the

Libraries Committee, 42, Gt. Dover Street, S.E.1, and they will help you in the task.

We are fully convinced that those who realise what a big thing Socialism is, and the necessity for it, will tackle this job right away.

### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

SUNDAYS	
Finsbury Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.
Victoria Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.
Regents Park ... ..	11.30 a.m.
SATURDAYS	
Rushcroft Road ... ..	7.30 p.m.
Roper Street, Eltham ... ..	7.30 p.m.
Undine St., Tooting ... ..	8.0 p.m.

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Fridays (from October, 16th), at 8 p.m., at the Dagenham Branch Library rooms, 179, Dagenham Road, Romford. Discussion after business at 8.45. Sec., 5, Cannington Road, Dagenham.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.8 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Sunday, 6.30 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at The Anchor Club Room, Lewisham Road. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Monday each month at the King's Cafe, Oxford Street (near All Saint's Church), Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8. Propaganda meeting every Sunday evening at 8 p.m.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on second Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8.30 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., A. Miller, 14, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E.2.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., at Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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[Monthly. Twopence

*The most . . .  
fundamental  
question today  
is the one we  
never mention.  
The . . . . .  
extirpation of  
the legalised  
idlers who live  
by robbing the  
poor.*

G. B. SHAW.

## The Coming Triumph of Socialism

**I**T is commonly said nowadays that the Socialist movement is in the doldrums, making no headway, and without prospect of doing so. And, indeed, this view has much to support it. What with apathy among many workers who formerly sympathised with the Labour movements—which they thought to be Socialist—and very active hostility among others who now give allegiance to the Fascist Governments, the outlook may be thought to be black indeed. Can it be said in face of these facts that the Socialist movement has any future, except to fight a forlorn defensive action against the encroaching dictatorships?

Yet on closer examination, a very positive and important cause for confidence is found to exist,

even if it appears in a curious disguise, that of a misrepresentation of Socialism. For while everywhere the defenders of capitalism proclaim the death of Socialism, they are all compelled in one way or another to pay it lip-service, because of the workers' constantly increasing discontent with capitalism. Never before, not even during and after the War,

were there so many millions of workers actively dissatisfied with the consequences of the existing system of society. Never before was discontent so deep and bitter. The effect of this on politics has been that there are no longer any politicians or parties which can hope to remain popular if they declare themselves unashamedly in favour of capitalism. Look where you will, in Europe, in the Dominions, in the United States of America, all of the capitalist parties have had to disguise themselves so that they can escape the unpopularity which attaches to the name capitalism. Roosevelt has to represent himself as an opponent of the banks and big business, has to seek allies among the Trade Unions and Labour groups, and has to put forward a programme containing reforms which the workers believe to be Socialist. The British ruling class long ago had to cover themselves with a camouflage of Labour leaders (the MacDonald group) and will no doubt be seeking before long to secure other Labour leaders to continue serving this purpose now that MacDonald's star has waned. In France capitalism had to seek new life under cover of a "Popular Front," led by a so-called Socialist Party. In Germany Hitler has to call his movement "National Socialist," and promises that Germany shall become Socialist throughout. Sir Oswald Mosley now has to add these two words to the name of his own organisation, because without them he cannot hope to attract essential working-class support.

Most instructive of all are the shrewd manoeuvres of Mussolini. This ex-Syndicalist, terrorist, defender of the assassination of kings, has never forgotten the need to keep a working-class backing, and to toy with pseudo-Socialist phrases.

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At present he is engaged in explaining away the poverty and unemployment that exist in Italy, and is worried because large numbers of Italian workers believe that life in Russia is preferable to life in Fascist Italy. What does Mussolini do in these circumstances? Externally he tells the world that he supports Hitler's crusade against Russian Communism; internally, he tells the Italian workers not to be attracted by Russia, because Russia is not Communist, but capitalist. In a speech reported in the *Times* (November 2nd, 1936) Mussolini said that the Russian system

is to-day but State super-capitalism carried to its most ferocious expression.

They are, then, all in the same difficulty. They are all seeking to defend capitalism and to resist the only possible alternative, Socialism, but none of them dares to say so. In order to defend capitalism they are all obliged to depict it as a form of Socialism. In order to work up hostility to rival powers they all have to stress the fact that the rival stands for capitalism.

Here lies the sure proof of the coming triumph of Socialism. Men's minds are looking away from capitalism and towards what they believe constitutes Socialism. Much can happen to delay the worker's understanding of genuine Socialism, but nothing can now stop it.

The kind of thing that delays the progress we desire does not come only from the Fascists, as a recent action of the Communists will show. A manifesto published by the Communist Party of Italy in an official organ of the Communist International actually proclaims the need for a United Front between Socialists, Communists and Fascists.

The manifesto was published in *International Press Correspondence* of August 22nd, 1936, and contains the following among other passages:—

Let us reach out our hands to each other, children of the Italian nation, Fascists and Communists, Catholics and Socialists, people of all opinions, and let us march side by side to enforce the right of existence of the citizens of a civilised country, as ours is. We have the same ambition—to make Italy strong, free and happy. Every trade union, every workers' organisation, every association must become the centre of our new-found unity, of our will to destroy the power of the small group of capitalist parasites who are starving and oppressing us.

The concrete proposal in the Manifesto is that the various Fascist and anti-Fascist groups should unite on the basis of the 1919 Fascist programme, which contained a number of proposed reforms of capitalism. Doubtless the scheme is promoted by Moscow in an endeavour to weaken the Italian Government, and a similar scheme is now being advocated by the German Communists. But whatever the motive behind it, such a policy is opposed to the interest of the working class and of Socialism. Seeing that the defenders of capitalism can only succeed by pretending that they stand for the workers and for Socialism, the one thing needed above all others is a concentrated effort to show the workers that the claim is false, and that an unbridgeable gulf exists between Socialism on the one side, and all kinds of reforms of capitalism on the other. Instead of which the Communists, by their action, are causing the workers to believe that it is possible for Socialists and Fascists to combine and work together.

As against all confusion and betrayals, the Socialist Party stands for independence and for clear-cut Socialist principles. H.

## Here and There

### The King and the Slums

THE publicity given to the decline in unemployment and to increasing prosperity (measured in the capitalist mind chiefly by Stock Exchange prices) is somewhat offset by the conditions in the depressed areas, at the moment in the spot-light.

Dudley Barker, in the *Evening Standard* (November 16th, 1936), quotes an instance of a typical town in the coal-mining and steel area in South Wales which has 60.6 per cent. of its industrial insurable population unemployed. He instances a case, again typical, of a miner who, when employed, is 6s. a week better off than when unemployed. Similar examples could be given of towns in the coal and steel districts in Durham, Northumberland and Scotland. They have been referred to and described by nearly all the capitalist newspapers. The results of the chronic depression in these industries are

appalling. Wide areas are derelict, bearing all the aspects of intense poverty, drabness and malnutrition. The *Daily Herald* (November 6th, 1936) reported a case of a shipbuilding worker who had not worked at his trade for 16 years. Innumerable cases have been reported of men in their twenties and some nearing their thirties who have never worked. Edward VIII, after his recent visit to the depressed areas in South Wales, said, "Something will be done." The extent to which "something will be done," we prophesy, will not touch the fringe of the problem. Can anything the King suggests bring obsolete industries back to life? If so, what will happen to those industries which have grown up and have rendered the older industries obsolete? Can he alter capitalism and the conditions of the world market to prevent certain industries being kept out of it by competition? Would he, for example, close down Indian cotton mills in order to put Lancashire back into the Indian market? If anything could be done to revive capitalist industry in the depressed areas

and bring back employment to the workers there, the capitalists, who are able, and have more knowledge about the needs and requirements of their system than Edward VIII, would do it. To them it would mean profit.

There is one aspect of the question to which misguided reformers might devote some attention. *Reynolds's* (November 8th, 1936) says coal royalties in 1935 amounted to £4,806,139. The share of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for Durham alone amounted to £313,580. There is now a suggestion that the Government buy out royalty owners at a sum mentioned in the region of £100,000,000. There are 4,000 royalty owners of whom a minority own the major share of royalties. "Something will be done." Will the King show his detachment of class interest and recommend as generous treatment for the unwanted scrap of the depressed areas? He won't—he can't! We live in a capitalist world and not in the pages of the fairy tales about good princes and kings who can work miracles. The sooner that workers in the depressed areas realise it the nearer they will be to the real solution of their damnable and unnecessary poverty.

### Damaged Goods

The *Observer* (November 8th, 1936) comments on a speech by Sir Kingsley Wood, in which he dealt with the Government's policy on malnutrition and the depressed areas in relation to physical fitness and recruiting. The *Observer* says:—

Physical fitness is being kept studiously in the foreground of policy, but it could not be gathered from Sir Kingsley Wood's speech on Friday that the Government are yet beyond the consultation stage. He did, however, allude to the need of "moral leadership"—which is but too obvious. Young men living on the dole who will not even accept an invitation to keep themselves fit at the public expense have need of being recalled to their better selves by means which it should be for a National Government to discover and define.

Pity the capitalist! Faced with the problem even in "prosperous" times, of millions of workers unemployed, he is compelled to provide a meagre dole. Faced with the problem of needing soldiers, fit and strong, to kill or to be killed, in a future war which many capitalists regard as inevitable, the capitalist finds the main source from which soldiers are drawn (the unemployed) to be composed of men rendered unfit by chronic poverty. The *Daily Telegraph's* military correspondent on the 30th October, gave the figures of men rejected for the army in 1935 as 31,000 out of 68,000, or 47 per cent. The correspondent also pointed out that experiments are being made on some of the "rejects" at Aldershot. These are given a special diet under the supervision of a medical officer. "It is believed," says the correspondent, "that eventually they will pass the required standard. This, however, is an expensive way of getting recruits." The probability is that men whose health has been ruined by years of under-nourishment will

defy all attempts to make them fit—despite the special diet. But what obviously concerns the Government more deeply is the fact that fewer workers are presenting themselves for recruitment. Hence the *Observer's* pointer that the Government should "discover and define" means of recalling "young men living on the dole" to "their better selves." They may have some difficulty in persuading workers who face a mean, drab and poverty-stricken existence every day of their lives that they possess anything worth fighting for. We hope so.

### A Horner's Nest for the Labour Party

The *Daily Telegraph* (November 17th, 1936) deals with a speech made by Sir Stafford Cripps, in which he made the statement (amazing for a Labour leader) that he

did not believe it would be a bad thing for the British working class if Germany defeated us. It would be a disaster to the profit-makers and the capitalists, but not necessarily for the working class. (Italics ours.)

Sir Stafford Cripps' statement is the direct opposite of Labour Party policy, and within a few days of his making it Labour leaders were busy repudiating him: Dr. Hugh Dalton did so with "indignation and astonishment," which he said be shared with the "leading personalities" in the Labour Party (*Daily Telegraph*, November 11th, 1936). From the point of view of Labour Party opportunism Sir Stafford Cripps is often indiscreet and not always sound. In this case, by accident, or perhaps because he has been reading our literature, he came very near stating an aspect of the Socialist case on war. If such a view were the official policy of the Labour Party (leadership being what it is, and followers what they are), there is no doubt that the British capitalist class would be seriously impeded—if not actually prevented—from conducting a war. No Government dare go to war if the organised workers were opposed to it. Such are the responsibilities of leadership. Naturally, then, Sir Stafford's speech got under the skin of the Labour Party opportunists and the capitalist journalists alike. The *Daily Telegraph* referred to it in a venomous editorial, in which Sir Stafford Cripps was misrepresented as being pro-Nazi. Mr. Thomas Johnston, M.P., in *Forward* (November 21st, 1936), was almost as bad. He showed how fortunate it is for the Labour Party that Germany happens to be ruled by a dictatorship, giving them the excuse, if war breaks out between England and Germany, of supporting it in the interest of "democracy." Mr. Johnston, in the event of an English defeat by Germany, saw England as one vast concentration camp under the domination of the Nazis.

"Sir Stafford Cripps is an able man: selfless and sincere, but this kind of talk is a joy to his capitalist enemies . . ." he said.



Is it? Let Mr. Johnston persuade Labour leaders to make similar speeches. Rather than joy, we would hazard that there would be "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth" among the capitalists.

As Labour leaders go, Sir Stafford is almost unique in his attitude to war. It will be interesting to see for how long he can maintain his independence of official policy before being brought to heel or dropped entirely from the Labour Party. The Labour Party has meagre scope for people whose "selfless and sincere" independence of thought causes embarrassment to its bureaucratic leadership and spoils its vote-catching.

### Why Socialists Reject Leadership

In a letter to the *Daily Herald* (November 4th, 1936) a reader says:—

Mr. Shinwell, Mr. Richardson and "Organiser" should come with me into the workshop and hear the adjectives used whenever the Labour Party or Trade Union leaders provide the subject of conversation.

They would learn that we in the workshop are sick and tired of the maudlin sentimentality and rhetoric of our leaders, and that we should like to hear a little less about Germans, Italians, Abyssinians, Spaniards, Russians and others, and would like to hear a lot more about what must be done for the English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Indians and others in the Empire whom it is likely we can assist. Making a fuss about a day's holiday with pay to celebrate the Coronation is not leadership.

Leadership is a difficult business, full of trials and pitfalls. Workers who believe in it and want to be led, expect results, and promises to be fulfilled. When results do not materialise they forsake the leaders. That they cannot do otherwise is the outcome of the belief in leadership. Perhaps there is some connection in workers being "sick and tired of the maudlin sentimentality and rhetoric" of Labour leaders and the Labour Party's net loss of 57 seats in the recent Borough elections in England and Wales.

### The State, a Bishop, and Jesus

Addressing his Diocesan Conference on the question of the Christian attitude towards the use of armed force, the Archbishop of Canterbury said: "The use of force by the State was the ministry of God for the protection of the people" (*Manchester Guardian*, October 13th, 1936). The intention of the speech was to give the Church's approval to war. It was made in direct response to a speech by Mr. Duff Cooper, the Minister of War, demanding that the leaders of the Church repudiate the pacifist doctrines of certain prominent partisans. The modern State controls such fiendish methods of armaments that their use by large Powers, according to much reputable opinion, would mean wholesale destruction and perhaps a "reversion to barbarism." However, according to the good bishop, the use of armed force by the State is the

"ministry of God" and, forsooth, "for the protection of the people." It is curious how, when the Christian religion fulfils its traditional task of adjusting its teaching to the needs of the ruling class, the modern conception of the abstract Christian God becomes more like the personal and intimate God of primitive tribal times. In this case the bishop's God is identified with the State, and the armed forces are his ministry. The bishop should now enlighten the poor sceptics, who, unlike him, have not seen "the light." If the "use of force by the State is the ministry of God," what grounds had he for reproaching the Italian State for grabbing Abyssinia by armed force—or the German State for its repressive measures against the German Protestant Church—or the Russian State for its "anti-God" campaign? Surely, "God moves in a mysterious way"?

The bishop's attitude is just typical Christian cant. The chief function of the State is the maintenance of class society. The function of the Church is to adapt Christian teaching to the needs of the ruling class. This it does loyally. And why not? Quite recently the Government's Tithe Act compensated the Church for its loss of tithe ownership to the extent of approximately £52,000,000. In return for tithe the Church now holds Government stock bearing 3 per cent. interest. Quite an inducement, surely, to trim the teachings of the out-of-work carpenter, Jesus, to the needs of capitalist millionaires.

The bishop's quotation of the Church's thirty-seventh article in support of his interpretation, brings to mind Marx's scathing reference: "The English Established Church will more readily pardon an attack on 38 of its 39 articles than on 1/39th of its income."

### Violence and the Agent Provocateur

A letter from a "George Barker, Stepney," published in the *New Leader* (November 6th, 1936) illustrates the danger of violent tactics in political agitation. Mr. Barker complained that during the recent demonstration against Fascism in East London, "... a man in the crowd yelled that the police were coming and urged everyone to throw stones, bottles and anything handy to them ... and the most striking thing to me was the sudden disappearance of the person invoking the crowd to start the rough stuff." The person in question was, in the opinion of Mr. Barker, an agent, there only to provoke the demonstrators to use violence against the police. He also stated that he had seen it happen at other demonstrations.

The writer of the letter sees the danger of the agent provocateur. What he does not see is that agents provocateurs can only provoke the workers to fight the police who have been nurtured by the Communists and I.L.P.ers into the belief that they can achieve their ends by violent methods.

### A Fabian in Russia

Mr. Sidney Webb (Lord Passfield) lecturing to Fabians at Friends House, made some interesting comments about Russia. As Mr. Webb has almost the authority of a Russian Government representative on matters concerning the internal affairs of Russia, what he has to say is of some interest. He pointed out that

More than half the adult population of Russia were working for themselves, fifty or sixty millions of them in partnership. There were probably fifty to sixty thousand managements, all of a public character, from village councils upwards, and including newspapers and theatres employing workers with wages. It was therefore ridiculous to say that the State was the only employer.—(*Manchester Guardian*, October 30th, 1936.)

In view of the enormous statistics emanating from Russian sources, which are likely to give the impression that Russia is one vast factory, Mr. Webb's statement is interesting.

### Popular Front Progress

The following is taken from the *Daily Telegraph* (November 6th, 1936), and is from its Paris correspondent:—

M. Daladier, the Defence Minister, is determined to check Communist and Socialist propaganda among French troops.

M. Giton, a Communist Deputy, complained that, while certain "Fascist" newspapers were permitted in the barracks, the Communist "Humanité" was banned.

In reply, M. Daladier said: "The Communist Party has formed 'cells' in the Army, which are sometimes known as such and at other times called 'committees of Republican defence.' I have decided to dissolve all these cells."

"I consider very dangerous," he said, "the section in which the 'Humanité' publishes letters from soldiers insulting their officers. The repercussions on the morale of the troops can be deplorable. I note that the 'Populaire' has for some time been imitating the 'Humanité'."

The "Populaire" is M. Blum's organ.

M. Daladier and M. Blum are both in the Popular Front. M. Blum is Premier. H. W.

### GLASGOW

The Glasgow Branch is endeavouring to increase the effectiveness of its work and propaganda by obtaining suitable premises for the Branch meetings. All members and sympathisers in Glasgow are urged to attend the Branch and give their utmost support to its activities.

Communications should be sent to the Secretary, R. MacNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow. The Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m., at the MacLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market.

## A Socialist Policy for Local Government Electors

A READER of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Mr. T. Grenfell, of Bath, has asked us to say what we think of the programme on which he contested the Municipal Elections in 1934. It is, he says, his desire to appeal to the electors on the issue of Socialism and his election address was intended to be of a Socialist character.

The address is rather too long for the space at our disposal; we will, therefore, deal with some of its contents only. Before doing so it may be useful to state over again what part the capture of the local councils plays in the achievement of Socialism. First of all, Socialism cannot be achieved by a minority of Socialists trying to impose it on a majority of non-Socialists or anti-Socialists. The experience of Russia and of every Labour Government proves that the S.P.G.B. was correct when, 32 years ago, it laid down that elementary principle. It is necessary to have a majority of Socialists politically organised, and not in one country only but internationally. Next it is necessary for the Socialist majority to have control of the machinery of Government, including the armed forces. While the machinery of local Government is less vital than the machinery of central Government, control of it is of course of importance, even though the powers of the local councils are ultimately derived from the centre and can be modified in whatever way those who control Parliament desire. (In other countries the control of the central authorities over the local authorities is sometimes more direct, sometimes much less directly effective than in Great Britain.)

It will be obvious from the above that Socialists cannot have one set of principles for parliamentary elections and another set for local elections. The solution of the whole problem of the working class lies in the achievement of Socialism and it is essential, therefore, that the workers at all times and places should be told that their problems cannot be solved inside capitalism, either by the administrative action of local authorities under the powers granted to them by Parliament, or by Parliamentary legislation of a social reform character.

In the light of this let us look at some of Mr. Grenfell's promises to electors.

First we notice that several things he undertakes to support cannot be settled locally because the power to control them is retained by the central Government. For example, he says that he stands for the "abolition of the Means Test," and opposes "any interference with the rights of free speech and freedom of association of the workers." Actually no local council can decide these things. No council can abolish the Means Test in defiance of Parliament's decision that it shall not be



abolished. Nor can any local council prevent the operation of the Trade Union Acts which fetter the workers' "freedom of association." Mr. Grenfell is therefore giving the workers of Bath a wrong idea of the nature and powers of local councils.

More important, however, than this is that Mr. Grenfell nowhere points out that the workers' problems cannot be solved without the abolition of capitalism. Thus he fails to fulfil the prime duty of a Socialist. Instead, in effect, he fosters the illusions of social reformers. Whatever the reason for this may be, the consequence is that Mr. Grenfell's poll of one-third of the total votes cast, must have been the votes of men and women who still believe in reformed capitalism and do not agree with the Socialist position. Mr. Grenfell, therefore, has behind him a reformist vote, not a Socialist vote, and reformist votes are useless for Socialism.

Still another defect is the acceptance of unsound economics. Mr. Grenfell demands that houses be provided "at rentals not exceeding 10 per cent. of the workers' weekly wage." This assumes that wages are determined in some way or other without relation to rents and other costs of living. It assumes that if rents are reduced wages will remain unchanged and the workers will benefit. This is a fallacy. The general levels of wages correspond, broadly, to the costs of living, and if rents or food prices fall wages fall also. It has often been pointed out in these columns that official enquiries showed that Viennese workers gained nothing from the almost entire abolition of rents in the years after the War. Wages fell correspondingly, and the gainers were the employers, who thus indirectly plundered the landlords.

There are other defects in the election address, but the above will show that it does not satisfy what is required of a Socialist election address.

ED. COMM.

## New Premises Fund

### FINAL APPEAL

A total of £300 is urgently required before close of Fund at the end of the year. Many readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD have doubtless "put off" from time to time their response. Delay no longer; realise what decent accommodation would mean for the S.P.G.B. and for Socialism. Visit present Head Office, and see how overworked officials and other voluntary workers carry on under almost impossible conditions.

Give NOW; give generously; it is your privilege. Let "duty" and privilege coincide, and send your donations to the Treasurer.

### Notice

Will all those who remit money to the S.P.G.B. please take care that Cheques, Money and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

## Answers to Correspondents

L. McMILLAN (Lindfield).—Thanks for the suggestions. We agree, and will bear them in mind.  
ED. COMM.

E. A. JAMES (Somerset).—You will notice to start with that the Socialist's opposition to Reformism, i.e., to the policy of building up an organisation on the basis of a reform programme, does not rest upon the contention that every reform is necessarily harmful or useless, but on the contention that reformist organisations cannot achieve Socialism. On the contrary, they confuse the workers and create apathy and despair.

The S.P.G.B., accordingly, is not prepared to propagate reforms or seek support on them.

The women's suffrage agitation was inspired and directed by propertied women seeking changes in the law which would improve their position as members of the propertied class. They were not interested in freeing either men or women workers from wage-slavery. On the contrary, they were, in the main, opposed to Socialism. It may also be pointed out that even before women received the vote the great majority of the voters were members of the working class, so that the electoral system did not stand in the way of emancipation.

The laws which prevent the employment of young children have, of course, had good effect, but like all reforms they touch only the fringe of the problem. In spite of all the existing legislation relating in various ways to children, not even the most enthusiastic reformist would claim that the position of working-class children is satisfactory. Malnutrition, bad housing, poor clothing, grotesquely inadequate education, premature employment, long hours, etc., are only a few of the problems which will never be solved under capitalism.

ED. COMM.

E. J. T. (Coventry).—Thanks for cuttings. Unfortunately, no date or name of paper.

ED. COMM.

P. P. M. (S.W.1).—Reply held over owing to pressure on space.  
ED. COMM.

T. H. MAHONEY.—Your criticisms are based on the wrong assumption that the Labourites are or have been Socialists. This is not correct, and we are not prepared to discuss their conduct on the assumption that they are Socialists. It is not correct that "Socialism had 2,000 years start" of Fascism. Socialism could only arise out of modern capitalism. You are quite wrong also in stating that the German Social Democratic Party was Socialist. Although some of its leaders paid lip-service to Marxism, the membership was non-Socialist, as the S.P.G.B. was pointing out long before 1914.  
ED. COMM.

## Meetings, Lectures, etc.

### MANCHESTER

Lectures on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at King's Café, 64-66, Oxford Road, Manchester.

Dec. 6 "The Cause of Dictatorship" - J. LEA  
" 13 "Can Socialists Stop War?" - A. REGINALD  
" 20 "Stalin v. Trotsky" - A. KOHN  
All invited. Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

### BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY

A meeting will be held in Bethnal Green Library on Wednesday, December 9th, at 8 p.m.

#### "Socialism and Fascism"

Speaker - COMRADE GRAINGER

All invited. Questions and Discussion. Admission free.

### BATTERSEA

A Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 10th, at 8.30 p.m. in the Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths (entrance first door in Burns Road).

#### "Socialism the Enemy of Dictatorships"

Speaker - R. ROBERTUS

Admission free. Questions and Discussion. All invited.

### ISLINGTON.

Lectures will be given at the Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Room 1. Wednesdays at 8.30.

Dec. 2 "Economics of Socialism" - E. WILLMOTT  
" 9 "Freethought and Socialism" - A. REGINALD  
" 16 "Trade Unionism and Socialism" - S. CASH  
" 30 "The International Conflict" - C. LESTER  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

### BLOOMSBURY BRANCH S.P.G.B.

## IS TROTSKY'S POLICY SOUND?

### A DEBATE

"Affirmative" - RAJ HANSA (for Bolshevik-Leninists)  
"Negative" - A. KOHN (for S.P.G.B.)

on Monday, December 7th, at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

Admission free.

### HACKNEY BRANCH S.P.G.B.

Lectures at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, Mare Street, Friday at 8.30 p.m.

Dec. 11 "The New Russian Constitution" - E. HARDY  
" 18 "Socialism and Crime" - M. BARITZ  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

### BRIXTON

## SUNDAY EVENING MEETINGS

Meetings are held on Sunday Evenings, at 7.30 p.m. at

### LICENSED VEHICLE WORKERS' CLUB,

30 Brixton Road, S.W.9.

Dec. 6 "World Chaos and the Way Out" - E. HARDY  
" 13 "Economic Ideas of British Fascism" - ROBERTUS  
" 20 "Can Pacifism Stop War" - G. CLIFFORD  
Questions and discussions. All invited. Admission free.

### LEICESTER

Under the auspices of the Leicester Secular Society, at the Secular Hall, Humberston Gate, Leicester, on Sunday, December 13th, at 6.30 p.m.

A LECTURE will be given by A. KOHN.

Subject - "Can We Stop War To-day?"

### LEYTON

At Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, on Sunday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

Dec. 6 "The Cinema under Capitalism" - J. CAMERON  
" 13 "Socialism and the Intellectuals" - J. KILNER  
" 20 "Hitler's Germany as I Saw it" - J. STONE  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion

### LEWISHAM

#### HISTORY AND ECONOMICS CLASSES

will be held on alternate Thursdays at Room I, 243, High Street, Lewisham, at 9 p.m.

Dec. 3 "History" - REGINALD  
" 10 "Economics" - WILMOTT  
" 17 "Imperialism" (History) - REGINALD  
" 31 "Economics" - WILMOTT

### EDUCATIONAL VISITS

First and Third Saturday in each month.

Dec. 5, 3 p.m. South Kensington Science Museum.

"Transport, Past and Present" H. RUSSELL

Dec. 19, 3 p.m. British Museum.

"Greece and Rome" REGINALD

Jan. 2, 2.30 p.m. Imperial War Museum (St. George Rd. near Lambeth North Station.)

"Capitalism Condemned" H. RUSSELL

In spite of the inclement weather, a large audience accompanied Comrade Lester round the Imperial War Museum on 7th November. These visits continue to be well supported.

### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

#### SUNDAYS

Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.  
Victoria Park ... 11.30 a.m.  
Regents Park ... 11.30 a.m.

### BRIXTON

A Branch has been formed at Brixton, and will meet at the Licensed Vehicle Workers' Club, 30, Brixton Road. Members and sympathisers are asked to attend.

The Branch meets on Monday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

### SOCIAL

An informal Social will be held at Head Office, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1, on Sunday, December 27th. There will be a gramophone recital, cards, and other items of interest. Refreshments will be available. Commence, 7.30 p.m.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE.

### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

DECEMBER,



1936

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions or the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money and Postal Orders and Cheques should be made payable. Postal Orders and Cheques should be crossed.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. . 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. . 1s. 3d.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD may also be obtained promptly through any of W. H. Smiths & Son's bookstalls.

## Atrocities in Spain

THE rebellion in Spain has taken on more and more the character of wholesale warfare, with all the ingenuities of cruelty which modern science and industry have made possible. Day and night the civilian population of Madrid has been subjected to artillery bombardment and the almost indiscriminate scattering of explosive and incendiary bombs. The deaths and casualties have run into thousands, while the number rendered homeless is estimated at far over 100,000. All of this has been done by the rebel generals on the plea—a common one with the higher ranks of the military profession, who, for some obscure reason, are still associated with notions of bravery—that it is simply their job to smash the Government and its civilian supporters. Behind the rebel generals, and running less personal risk even than they, is the Catholic Church, which lent its support to the rebellion, and the forces of monied and landed property which fear the workers and peasants, whether in Spain or outside, more than anything else.

Among those sympathetic to the rebels in this country may be included the *Times* and *Daily Telegraph*. It is for that reason worth while placing on record what they reluctantly admit about the conduct of their friends in Spain. The *Times*, in a review of the Report published by the rebels on the atrocities committed by Government supporters, says:—

... the fratricidal strife in Spain has been peculiarly envenomed by recourse to the taking of

hostages and by ruthless reprisals, and there is, unhappily, reason to suppose that General Franco's opponents could level against the forces under his command counter-charges equally valid though probably less numerous.—(*Times*, October 28th, 1936.)

Earlier the *Times*, in an editorial, said:—

... there can be little doubt that the insurgents are conducting the war with a cold-blooded ruthlessness as revolting as any of the cruelties perpetrated by the supporters of the Government.—(*Times*, October 10th, 1936.)

The *Times* and *Daily Telegraph* have both had something to say about the wanton slaughter from the air of civilians in Madrid.

The *Daily Telegraph* says that

... the ruthless bombardment of Madrid by General Franco's forces is shocking his friends as well as his enemies. ...—(*Daily Telegraph*, November 19th, 1936.)

While the *Times*' own correspondent in Madrid sent the following report on November 18th:—

Although shrapnel takes a constant toll, air-raids cause most damage, and it is estimated that 50 tons of bombs have fallen on Madrid in 10 days. The damage to historical buildings is impossible to give in detail here, but the worst loss so far has been the Palacio de Liria, seat of the Duke of Alba, which was hit by an incendiary bomb yesterday evening. The palace contents are second only in artistic value to the collections of the National Palace. The fire burned all night—a terrifying torch symbolising the destructive agency of the civil war. It is believed that some of the principal treasures were removed several months ago, including a painting by Titian, armour, tapestry (the gift of Louis XIV), and part of the archives. The chief groom, Letheridge, his family, and the Duke's dog are refugees in the British Embassy.

Not content with destruction by day, which may to some extent be directed against military objectives, the insurgents come at night, bombing round the conflagrations already existing, and throwing flares which water cannot extinguish.—(*Times*, November 19th, 1936.)

So much for the forces of "culture," "civilisation" and "religion," which deliberately and for motives of class interest plunged Spain into this civil war.

Before leaving the subject there is the question of the employment of Moorish troops. We do not share the view that brutalities carried out by human beings with black or yellow skins are any worse than those carried out by white men, and in any event, the responsibility rests with the white-skinned high command, which gives the orders. Moreover, as has been pointed out by Franco's friends, black troops were used by the Allied Governments in the War, and by France in the occupation of the German Rhineland.

It is, however, one of the ironies of history that the Moors, now being employed to crush the Spanish Government, are the same Moors who only a few years ago were praised to the skies by the British Labour Party when they were fighting to resist French and Spanish occupation of Morocco.

In order to bolster up its mistaken notion that national independence is something the workers should fight for, the Labour Party then idealised the Moors. Now it can find nothing good in them.

## The Workers and the Empire

A CORRESPONDENT (H. W. H., Glasgow) writes asking us if we will deal with a point raised in

*Forward* (Glasgow, October 5th, 1935) by Mr. J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary of the National Council of Labour Colleges. Arising out of an article by Sir Norman Angell, entitled, "Are Colonies Worth Having?" Mr. Millar wrote a letter containing the following:—

He (Norman Angell) argues that he answers Italy's jealousy about Britain's Colonial Empire by saying—in so many words—"Yes, but it doesn't materially help us to deal with our economic problems, for we've 2,000,000 unemployed." He doesn't realise that it is largely thanks to the profits and opportunities arising from our present and past Colonial Empires that the British unemployed have almost as high a standard of life as many millions of employed in Germany and Italy.

Our correspondent adds:—

Now I do not know if Mr. Miller's reasoning is correct, but if it is does it not show that the British workers' standard of life is to a great extent dependent upon the maintenance of the British Empire against foreign invaders, and that without it their standard of living would decrease? I am not suggesting, of course, that, even if true, this would provide them with a moral right to oppress Colonial peoples, but the question is of interest from a purely economic point of view.

Reply.

There are several separate issues raised in this letter, and it is necessary to take them separately:—

First, we may say that Mr. Millar's facts do not impress us. Mr. Millar makes the claim that the British unemployed have almost as high a standard of life as many millions of employed in Germany and Italy. He might have added with equal

truth that the British unemployed have almost as high a standard of life as many millions of em-

ployed in *Great Britain*, in *France*, in *Portugal*, and in *Holland*—all of them countries with large colonial empires. Apart from a generally low standard of living in Portugal, there are in all countries masses of workers living on or about a bare subsistence level.

He might recall that spokesmen for German Nazism have recently been boasting that widespread destitution, such as exists in our "depressed areas" is unknown in Germany.

Also Mr. Millar might have added that the countries with a higher standard of life than this country include the Scandinavian countries, the U.S.A., and the British Dominions—all of them countries with little or no overseas Empire.

We reject the implication contained in Mr. Millar's argument that wages depend on the wealth of the capitalist class. Abundant experience shows workers desperately poor, in spite of the riotous wealth of their employers—some Indian workers and their millionaire employers are a case in point; while, on the other hand, under favourable conditions workers have been able to maintain their standard of living in spite of the falling profits of their employers.

Therefore, it is not safe to assume that greater wealth for Italian capitalists (due to profitable colonial plunder) would lead to a higher standard of living for Italian workers; nor that the loss of parts of the British Empire would

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocracy and plutocracy.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



reduce the British workers' standard of living. In both cases many factors, including factors of a world character, would have to be taken into account.

To take an actual example, we deny that the acquisition of Boer lands after the Boer War and the mandated territories after the Great War has improved the position of the British workers, or worsened the position of any of the workers concerned.

What is true, of course, is that the loss of colonies may (although this is not necessarily true of all cases) cause a disturbance of capitalist trading relationship, which results in aggravating unemployment while re-adjustment is going on. For example, if Great Britain lost her colonial empire and the new owners prohibited the import of British goods, the trades affected—having been built up on this market—would suffer loss of sales and increased unemployment. In time the situation would adjust itself so far as capitalism ever does, with the acquisition of new markets elsewhere, or with the development of some new or expanded industry.

One other fact which has bearing on this question is that it has yet to be proved that colonies do add to the wealth of the "country" which controls them. That they are profitable for groups of capitalists who are directly interested is admitted, but the capitalist class as a whole has to

meet the cost of capturing and keeping them. There is considerable evidence to show that many colonies cost the whole capitalist class more than they are worth. They are retained because the capitalists immediately concerned are sufficiently influential to see that they are retained.

Mr. Grover Black, in two books, "A Place in the Sun" and "The Balance Sheets of Imperialism" (Columbia University Press; published by Milford, 10s. 6d. and 14s.), argues with a wealth of facts and figures that colonies do not "pay," except to the minority directly concerned. The cost of capturing and keeping them far outweighs all the profit derived from them.

Finally, even if it were granted that the loss of the Empire would cause a temporary or even a permanent lowered standard of life for the British workers under capitalism, that does not constitute an argument for the limitless sacrifice of workers' lives, necessitated by wars to defend the Empire. Would Mr. Millar say that it is worth while sacrificing a million British workers' lives (as in the Great War) in order to defend the Empire, and sacrificing millions of German and Italian workers' lives in order to wrest it from the British capitalists, and hand it over to Italian and German capitalists?

The case against working class support for wars is not touched by Mr. Millar's superficial argument.

ED. COMM.

## Marx on Trade Unions

("Marx and the Trade Unions," by A. LOZOVSKY, 5s. net, Martin Lawrence.)

TO declare that the struggle of the working class for emancipation *ultimately* turns upon the conquest of political power, is by no means to say that the matter is a purely political one. The class struggle is both political and economic in character, not merely in the sense that the need to gain control of the machinery of government is necessary, among other things, to acquire control of all economic resources, but also in the sense that the workers, if they are to fit themselves for the attainment of their emancipation, must carry on the struggle on the economic field under capitalism.

The Trade Union movement, despite its many shortcomings from the Socialist point of view, is the expression of the workers' attack and resistance against the power of capital in the economic sphere of social activity. The present day Trade Unions may appear to many as reactionary organisations on account of many of their pro-capitalist ideas, besides the fact that the capitalist has largely adapted himself to their existence, but beneath the surface of this lies the dire necessity of the workers

to carry on their day-to-day struggles through this or some form of economic organisation.

In the earlier days of capitalism's history many and bitter were the struggles made by the workers for even the bare right to combine or associate in ever so small a way to discuss among themselves the conditions under which they were called upon to work for their masters. Those were the days when the combination laws existed, and when the mere association of workers was regarded by the employers as being, to quote one eminent authority, "in the nature of mutiny," and as "destructive of the discipline necessary to the expansion of trade," besides being an interference with the right of the employer "to do what he liked with his own."

From that attitude of mind it may be gathered what repression and persecution the early attempts at working-class economic organisation called forth. There were then no Knighthoods or Privy Councilorships doled out to Trade Union leaders as there are to-day. In the old days those who were prominent in such movements were often awarded "Government jobs" and "honours" of a

different kind. Their reward was free living accommodation, free dress, and a little spare time to reflect upon the "error of their ways"—in prison.

It is little more than a hundred years ago that the law connected with the prohibition of combination was *relaxed*, and the "right" of collective bargaining established. But like most rights granted by a ruling class to a subject class, the workers' "right" to combine to discuss the terms of the sale of their labour-power has been foiled time and time again, not only by political enactments, but often in actual defiance of the law. In fact, and apart from recent history, in the year following the repeal of the combination laws, an unsuccessful attempt was made in Parliament to smash the act of repeal, whilst in 1834, ten years after the legal sanction was given to the Trade Unions, six agricultural labourers of Dorchester, whose "crime" was one of combining with others to secure wages amounting to something like ten shillings a week, were tried, imprisoned and deported, under the pretext of having administered unlawful oaths.

The deeply-laid fact is that the master class has never failed to realise that the association of the workers for economic purposes, i.e., for rates of wages, hours and general conditions of employment, is a source of danger to the power of capital over wage labour. To in any way challenge the right of the capitalist to exact his full tribute from the productivity of the workers is fundamentally regarded by the capitalist class as any similar challenge made by the serfs against the feudal lords of a few hundred years ago, or by the slaves of antiquity against the slave owners—as a challenge to be crushed, compromised with, or cajoled, as the circumstances determine.

The better-informed sections of the ruling class have clearly enough seen that once the right of the workers to some say in the matter of the sale of their labour-power is conceded, it is not a great distance to reach the concept that the workers may claim the right to the produce of their labour, and "to do what they like with their own." Both Marx and Engels thoroughly appreciated the rise and development of the Trade Union movement, and their many statements on this aspect of working class activity should be studied by all who desire to reach the Socialist objective.

It is worth while mentioning that one of Marx's most popular works, "Value, Price and Profit," which contains a summary of his leading economic theories, arose from, and is based upon, the question of working-class economic action under capitalism.

Writing to Engels in 1865, Marx mentioned that—

A meeting of the International will be held to-night. A fine old scout, an old Owenist named Weston, a cabinet-maker, put up two points, which he has been constantly defending in *The Beehive*.

(1) That a general rise in the rate of wages cannot be of any advantage to the workers.

(2) That in view of this, etc., the trade unions have a *harmful* effect. If these two theses, in which *he alone* of all the members of our society believes, were adopted, we should be in a bad fix, both on account of our local trade unions as well as of the infection of strikes that has spread all over the Continent.

Weston's main points are thus summarised by Marx:—

(1) That wages determine the value of commodities.

(2) That if the capitalists to-day pay five shillings instead of four, they will to-morrow (enabled to do so by the increased demand) sell their commodities for five shillings instead of four.

Thus, the conclusion to be drawn from this false idea was the equally false and dangerous notion that the struggle of the workers to raise wages or prevent their fall, was useless. Of course, Marx exposed the absurdity of Weston's theory, not only on the ground of general economic theory, but from actual historical happenings, which proved the opposite to the position Weston seriously thought to be the case. Marx proved that the workers can, and did, gain by an increase in wages and, further, that the capitalist cannot necessarily compensate himself for his loss in increased wages by charging higher prices for his products.

The International Working Men's Association, founded in 1864, and in which both Marx and Engels were outstanding members, constantly stressed the importance of the workers' need to carry on their struggles through the medium of the Trade Unions, but, at the same time, endeavoured to get the Unions to widen their outlook and broaden the basis of their activities.

At the Hague Congress of the International, held in 1872, Marx proposed a resolution "on the political activity of the proletariat," and among many other points, stated that:—

The consolidation of the workers' forces attained in the economic struggle will also have to serve as a lever in the hand of this class for the struggle against the political power of its exploiters. In view of the fact that the owners of the land and of capital always utilised their political privileges to guard and perpetuate their economic monopolies and to enslave labour, the conquest of political power comes to be the great task of the proletariat.

An important point worth noting is that although Marx saw and experienced no great readiness on the part of the workers to respond to the Socialist appeal, he did not on that account fail to back their efforts at trying to improve their lot through the Trade Union movement, not only in England, but all over the world. In fact, the International Working Men's Association, acting largely under the influence of Marx, acquired a considerable amount of popularity because of its constant support of strikes and lock-outs.

Writing to Engels in 1867, Marx says:—

Our International celebrated a great victory. We secured monetary aid for the striking bronze workers of Paris from the British trade unions. As soon as the bosses saw this they gave in. This business has



caused a great deal of noise in the French papers, and we are now an established force in France.

But the popularity seems not to have been all one sided, for it came to be the slogan of the bourgeoisie that strikes and other working-class activities were caused not by capitalist greed, but by the "wicked" and "malicious" International. Therefore did Marx have need to ironically comment in a report to the Fourth Congress of the International:—

The report of your General Council will mainly relate to the guerilla fights between Capital and Labour—we mean the strikes which, during the last year, have perturbed the Continent of Europe and were said to have sprung neither from the misery of the labourer nor from the despotism of the capitalist, but from secret intrigues of our Association.

At the base of all Marx's views on this side of working-class organisation was his profound conviction that some sort of fight, however instinctive, has to be made if the working class is to prove worthy of its emancipation from wage slavery, and to prevent itself from becoming a permanent make-shift tool in the hands of the ruling class. The previously-mentioned work of Marx, "Value, Price and Profit" contains the following statement:—

In their attempts at reducing the working day to its former rational dimensions, or, where they cannot enforce legal fixation of a normal working day, at checking overwork by a rise of wages, a rise not only in proportion to the surplus time exacted, but in a greater proportion, working men fulfil only a duty to themselves and their race. They only set limits to the tyrannical usurpations of capital. Time is the room of human development. A man who has no free time to dispose of, whose whole lifetime, apart from the mere physical interruptions by sleep, meals and so forth, is absorbed by his labour for the capitalist, is less than a beast of burden. He is a mere machine for producing foreign wealth, broken in body and brutalised in mind. Yet the whole history of modern industry shows that capital, if not checked, will recklessly and ruthlessly work to cast down the whole working class to this utmost state of degradation.

Mr. Lozovsky has helped to make more widely known the part taken by Marx to prevent this downward trend of capitalism upon the working-class position. His many references from the history of Marx's life's work will reveal that the founders of the modern Socialist movement were far from being "armchair philosophers." We recommend this work to all working-class students. Mr. Lozovsky's flattery of the Stalin régime in Russia we may comment upon in the future. At the moment we are concerned with presenting the standpoint of Marx on the all-important subject of Trade Unions.

ROBERTUS.

\* The pamphlet "Value, Price and Profit" is obtainable from this office, 6d. (post free, 7d.)

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## Fattening Up the Lambs for the Slaughter

**D**URING the past few years the world situation has become more chaotic. From the end of 1929 to about the middle of 1934 capitalism was passing through possibly the greatest economic crisis of its history. With recovery has come a more intensified scramble for the world's markets and raw materials. *Imperialism* is the order of the day. The large empires of France and Great Britain are threatened by the Imperial aspirations of highly-developed countries, such as Germany, Italy and Japan.

England's need for a larger armed force to protect the economic interests of British capitalism is more imperative to-day than ever. But England's great recruiting sergeant, Unemployment, has been very unsuccessful of late in raking in the number of recruits required. Large numbers of unemployed youths are quite unwilling to be led like lambs to the slaughter in a future war, and unemployment benefit helps them to ignore the call to "join up and see the world." On the other hand, owing to the extremely poor quality and quantity of the food, clothing and shelter allowed the workers, even when in employment, a large proportion of those offering themselves for service in the armed forces do not pass the test for physical fitness.

British capitalism finds itself in a dilemma. If unemployment benefits are raised, so as to keep the workless well-fed, clothed and housed, they are not likely to join the Army or Navy. Alternatively, if the unemployed are not given sufficient means of subsistence they become physically unfit for military service. What's to do about it? We are informed by the *Daily Herald* (July 4th, 1936) that:—

The War Office is considering a system of making unfit recruits fit. The scheme is simply to fatten them up.

After six months of reasonably adequate diet, special exercises and careful attention, the recruits are expected to be up to normal standards.

An official said yesterday that the majority of the rejections were caused by under-nourishment.

If the working class, in the face of such an indictment of the present social order, are still prepared to allow themselves to be led to the shambles in the interests of the social parasites who control our very lives, then they have themselves to blame for neglecting to find the solution to their poverty-stricken existence.

Our advice to the workers is to study the Socialist case. Come to our meetings, read our literature. Join up in the only army in Great Britain worthy of the working class, the Socialist Party of Great Britain, with the object of wiping parasites and poverty and the danger of war from the face of the earth for ever.

H. G. H.

## The S.P.G.B. and Fascism

The Editor.

Dear Sir,

Assuming Sir Oswald Mosley and his supporters (a fantastic assumption I admit) were to attempt to take political power by force, thus emulating Mussolini, Franco, etc., what would be the attitude of the S.P.G.B. in such a case.

Would the S.P.G.B. remain neutral, as you maintain that the S.P.G.B. has no concern in capitalistic affairs or would the S.P.G.B. take up arms in defence of the Government and democracy?

Yours faithfully,

T. S.

Reply.

Our correspondent must forgive us if we are unwilling to say exactly what the S.P.G.B. would do in a hypothetical case which he himself describes as "a fantastic assumption."

We can, however, clear the air somewhat by dealing with some actual events, which will help to bring the fantastic assumption nearer to earth.

Mussolini did not take power by force. That is one of the myths created by him, and believed by his more stupid admirers at home and abroad. The Government which was in office at the time, a democratic, constitutional Government, together with the King of Italy, wanted Mussolini in office, and arrangements to this end were all made before the farcical "March on Rome," which Mussolini made in a sleeping-car, accompanied by nothing more forcible than his customary bowler hat and a silk topper. (See "Mussolini's Italy," by H. Finer, Gollancz, 1935, p. 157.) His first Cabinet included a number of non-Fascists, and Parliament in November, 1922, voted him the emergency powers, which he used for his further actions.

Outside Parliament the Fascists were a rapidly growing force, skilfully exploiting the workers' dissatisfaction with the discredited Trade Unions and so-called Socialist Party to win over the workers to their side.

Now let us put our correspondent's question in a real background.

"Would the S.P.G.B. take up arms in defence of a capitalist Government such as that existing in Italy before Mussolini was made Premier?"

In the first place, that Government expressly declined to use arms against Mussolini, as it was already very busy using them against workers and workers' organisations.

In the second place, large numbers, perhaps a majority of Italian workers, were pro-Fascist.

The answer, therefore, is that the S.P.G.B. now, as always, considers it utterly useless for a minority to take up arms against the capitalist State plus the masses of workers who, in their ignorance, support capitalism and oppose Socialism. The only policy deserving of support is that of gaining control of the State machinery, including the armed forces.

If Mosley is able to rally enough working class support to make him a political force in this country

the ruling class may take him into the Cabinet, as Mussolini was taken in. In those circumstances in England, as in Italy, the working class (including the members of the S.P.G.B.) will have to pay for the blindness which causes workers to support capitalism. Neither the S.P.G.B. nor any other minority could prevent those consequences by armed force or by any other method.

The only thing to do is to carry on, in whatever way it is possible, Socialist propaganda, in order to win the workers away from Mosleyism and from every other brand of capitalist-reformism, including Labourism, Liberalism, Popular Frontism, etc.

To talk of armed resistance in those circumstances would be as fantastic as it would have been for the S.P.G.B.—itself repudiated and opposed by the great mass of the workers—to have taken up arms against the decision to prolong the life of Parliament, and thus avoid a General Election during the war.

ED. COMM.

## An Ancient Russian Custom

**W**HEN Mr. Pritt, K.C., was asked to explain why the prisoners in the recent Russian "Terrorist" trial confessed so readily and abjectly, he thought he had answered the question by saying that the Russians do this sort of thing—it is a characteristic of the Russians. Now we learn that a new batch of 21 prisoners have been arrested in Russia, charged and found guilty of military and economic espionage, distributing Fascist literature, and plotting terrorist acts in company with Trotsky. Reuter's Moscow correspondent states that he was told by M. Litvinov, the Russian Foreign Minister, that the majority of the prisoners "had already confessed to the charges made against them" (*Daily Telegraph*, November 18th).

The prisoners are not, in this case, Russians, but *Germans*.

We now await a statement from Mr. Pritt that it is a characteristic of the *Germans* to confess.

A statement published by the *Evening Standard* has bearing on this point.

Certainly a Russian trial bears no relation to democratic ideas of justice. But the Bolsheviks, who are cynical in these matters, may point out that German methods of justice differ little from their own. When a Communist, spy, or traitor is tried in Germany the proceedings are secret. No documents are produced, and, as often as not, the public is informed that the victim has confessed to his alleged misdeeds.—(*Evening Standard*, November 23rd, 1936.)

GILMAC.

#### NOTICE TO NEW READERS

If you are reading THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for the first time and would like further information about the S.P.G.B., write to the General Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1.



## Classless Society

Canning Town,  
London, E.16.

Dear Sir,

In a copy of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD left at my house I notice a phrase is frequently used, i.e., "The Classless Society." Will you kindly explain as fully as possible what you mean by this?

It appears to me that such a position, if ever achieved, could not remain in practice, for surely the members of the community holding the more responsible positions and directing "the centralised machinery of administration" (quoted from THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, December, 1934, p. 54) would, and could, fairly ask for greater recompense in return for shouldering this responsibility. It follows, then, that there will be, as at present, many varying grades or classes of society—graded according to their abilities; the only class which will not then be extant being the person deriving an income from capital investment.

This, I think, is what the phrase must mean, but allowing that such is the meaning, it appears to be a most vague manner of describing the position I have mentioned previously. However, I should be very pleased to know your definition of the "Classless Society."

Wishing your policy, which I gather is the educating of the general public to an understanding of Socialism, every success.

I remain,

Yours, etc.,

A. H. KINCEY.

### REPLY.

A careful study of the copy of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, to which the above correspondent refers, should have convinced him that the S.P.G.B. only knows of two classes in present-day society, namely, the working class and the capitalist or master class. It is the exploitation of the former by the latter which gives rise to the manifold problems with which we are confronted, including the particular one which is puzzling him. The workers are graded and degraded because the structure and purpose of capitalism make that necessary.

Grades, however, are not classes. Hundreds of thousands of workers are promoted to more or less responsible and better-paid positions in the course of their lifetime. Very few can, however, change their class. Those promoted go on working for the master class in one capacity or another; quite unlike those rare ones who suddenly find themselves being left fortunes by hitherto unheard of uncles in the Colonies, or who succeed in winning the Irish sweep.

The reason for the illusion that the more highly-paid workers belong to a different class from those to whom they give orders arises from this very fact, that they are specially paid, not merely to administer affairs in the technical sense, but to supervise or maintain in one way or another the exploitation of their nominal subordinates. Although they receive greater recompense for this work, many of their subordinates are usually as competent, technically, as themselves.

In the very early days of capitalism, the capitalists themselves had to perform this task; but the growth of their capital enabled them to

employ special wage-slaves for the purpose, on whom they conferred in varying degrees the appearance and some small portion of the substance of social superiority. So great have the powers of production grown to-day, however, that there are, not only a multitude of unemployed labourers of varying degrees of skill, or lack of it, but also a growing number of unemployed technicians and administrators of all types.

The multiplicity of parties and the fierce competition in the political arena is one expression of this. Under Socialism, however, the principle of co-operation will apply, not merely inside the individual factory or other industrial establishment, but throughout the whole process of social administration. The motive for effort will be neither private profit for the masters, nor individual wages for the slaves. The production and distribution of wealth as efficiently as possible will be in the common interest of all.

This will rule out any need for "grades" (or "classes" as our correspondent terms them) among the workers. As social equals they will be free to develop their abilities in any desired direction to the fullest possible extent. The material means for their training already exist or could be rapidly produced when the restrictions imposed by capitalist conditions have been removed. There will, therefore, be no lack of trained men and women capable of occupying responsible positions interchangeably, and their development into a class or caste is inconceivable. This was made possible and necessary in ancient times only because of the limited resources and small wealth-producing capacity of society in those days.

Economic development has given rise to priests and patriarchs, feudal lords and capitalists in turn. Each of these groups have evolved into classes and dominated society for a period only. New conditions and new needs have brought about the downfall of all, save the last-named, who now stand confronted by the heirs to the slavery of the ages. The emancipation of this class, however, the working class, involves that of all mankind, and the accomplishment of the goal of history, the classless society.

E. B.

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## Dictatorship & Parliament

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SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Comrades,

Being interested in the official position of your organisation, I would appreciate your answers to the following questions:—

1. Does the S.P. of G.B. recognise the necessity of instituting a dictatorship of the proletariat?

2. If it does, under what conditions can such a dictatorship be realised, and what would be its chief characteristics?

3. Is it possible for the working class to capture and retain political power without crushing and destroying the democratic, parliamentary form of the state which exists in modern capitalist countries to-day?

Comradely yours,

HARRY MANDELL.

Reply.

The phrase, "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," is now generally used to cover the political form adopted by the Russian Bolsheviks and urged by the Communists of different countries. We take this, therefore, to be the form implied in the question, whatever may have been the earlier meaning of the phrase, and we will answer it from this point of view. We are opposed to this form of Dictatorship as it is an evidence of lack of understanding of Socialism on the part of the majority of the population—the workers. While the workers lack understanding they will defeat all the efforts of a minority in control of power to introduce a system based upon the common ownership of the means of production and distribution. This fact has been clearly demonstrated in Russia and the earlier, and probably more sincere of the Bolsheviks, had very rapidly to face it, and to curtail their proposals for ushering in a new system on a communal basis. Russia's recent advance towards a democratic parliamentary form of Government is a further evidence of the failure of "Dictatorship" to deliver the goods it promised. It was because the Bolsheviks were weak and had to depend to a large extent upon trickery that they were compelled to destroy democratic forms. Had they allowed free expression the rule of the Russian Communist Party would have been threatened right at the commencement.

When the majority of the workers in a particular country understand Socialism and, therefore, what it implies, they will proceed to introduce it once they have captured political power. To do so it will be essential to allow to all the means to express their views freely and, owing to the understanding of the majority, there will be nothing to fear from this free expression of opinion. As the majority will have control of power, any minority

that is foolish enough to try to thwart the wishes of the majority will lack the means to make effective any destructive intentions.

Once Socialism is in process of being introduced the coercive sides of the present parliamentary form will become obsolete. There will be no need to "crush" as they will just disappear.

ED. COMM.

## "I Took off My Tie"

By HUGH MASSINGHAM (W. Heinemann, Ltd.),  
10s. 6d.

MR. MASSINGHAM is an author of some reputation. Impelled by "curiosity and struck by the extraordinary fact that two communities were living side by side, each with its own peculiar customs, superstitions, culture . . . and that each was ignorant of the other," he visited, and decided to live, in the East End of London, to see for himself how workers fare.

In dealing with a subject that has been dealt with before he succeeds in maintaining a sense of proportion. He does not dramatise, neither is he sentimental. He writes in simple language, and stimulates the imagination. Anyone living in the East End will recognise an accurate picture of life and work there. But what a drab picture. Dirt, noise, ignorance and sordid poverty. . . .

Mr. Massingham seems to have met prejudice, suspicion and animosity wherever he went, even though he "took off his tie" and tried to be "one of us like." The people he met seem to possess a vocabulary which extended very little beyond a few fruity idioms, which, on paper, might excite literary-minded persons, but give the impression that the worker is just a mental bumpkin. The trouble with Mr. Massingham's book is that it is superficial, and does not get below the surface. It leaves the impression that the horrible drabness of slum life is unalterable, something the worker is ordained to live. To be precise, it is literary, a picture in words; a picture which paints only what is seen, and nothing potential.

Mr. Massingham might be recommended to extend his investigations further into "the extraordinary fact" that "two communities" live side by side. He might enquire why there are two classes in society, why one of them is poverty-stricken, ill-educated, dispossessed, and has to sell its labour-power in order to live whilst the other possesses the means of living, does not need to work, and has leisure and the refinements of life. To do this he would not have to "take off his tie," nor live in the East End. He need only remove the literary wool from over his eyes and apply himself to a study of capitalism. He might then produce a more useful book, useful from a worker's or a Socialist's point of view.

A. G. A.



**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA**

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

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Head Office and Headquarters of the Socialist Party in Canada, 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.

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Those requiring books or pamphlets on Socialism, or wishing to subscribe to the SOCIALIST STANDARD, official organ of the S.P. of G.B. (subscription rates, 75 cents a year), write to Literature Agent, c/o F. Neale.

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Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 192, East 26th Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

## Branch Directory

**BATTERSEA and TOOTING.**—Branch meets Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Latchmere Baths (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), Battersea, S.W.11. Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Sec., S.P.G.B., 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., over Restaurant, 452 High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Tett, 205 Torbay Rd., Harrow. Lectures fortnightly from 12th June.

**DAGENHAM and ROMFORD.**—Branch meets alternate Fridays (from October, 18th), at 8 p.m., at the Dagenham Branch Library rooms, 179, Dagenham Road, Romford. Discussion after business at 8.45. Sec., 5, Cannington Road, Dagenham.

**DUNDEE.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 7, Kidd Street. Sec., John McQueen, 55 William Street.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., No. 2 Room, London Co-op., 16, High Street North, E.6 (side entrance), Lloyd Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to A. Collins, 206, Kempton Road, E.6.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 8 p.m. Discussion after Branch business. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. Lea, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place. Branch meets last Sunday in month at 6.30 p.m., in No. 1 Room, Free Gardeners Hall, Picardy Place. Non-members invited. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. at McLean Memorial Hall, Salt Market, Glasgow. Communications to R. McNamara, 5, Stevenson Street, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., H. Dowden, 144, Mayfield Road, E.9.

**HAMILTON.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays in Co-operative Board Room, Gateside Street, at 7 p.m. Lecture on Economics after branch business. All invited. Communications to T. Jones, 47, Hillside Crescent, Hamilton.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets, 8 p.m. every Wednesday, at 142, Richmond Road, Ilford. Visitors invited. Opposition welcomed. All communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.7. Branch meets on Wednesdays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., G. D. Leslie, 70 Malta Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets Sunday, 6.30 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**LEWISHAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., Room I, 243, High Street, Lewisham. Sec. G. Wood, 53 Eltham Green Road, S.E.9.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Monday each month at the King's Cafe, Oxford Street (near All Saint's Church), Sec., H. Adler, 74 Shaftesbury Road, Manchester, 8. Propaganda meeting every Sunday evening at 8 p.m.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday each month, at 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10. Discussion on 4th Friday.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., B. Osborne, 8, Fowler Terrace, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Sundays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 2, A.E.U. Institute, Stanley Street.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets on second Wednesday at 8 p.m., at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Branch meets Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (near Whitechapel Station). Communications to Sec., A. Miller, 14, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E.2.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.17.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.23. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., at Tirling House, Stuart Crescent.